



Wisconsin Shares Child Care Assistance Manual

Chapter 1: Program Information and Eligibility



Wisconsin Department of Children & Families

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1.1.0 Program Overview

1.1.1 Program Purpose

The purpose of the Wisconsin Shares Child Care program is to provide child care assistance for working low-income families; working foster parents, kinship care relatives providing care under a court order and receiving kinship care benefits, and subsidized guardians/interim caretakers in Milwaukee county; and for individuals who are preparing for employment through Wisconsin Works, Food Share Employment and Training Program, tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or are in high school and working on their high school diploma.

1.1.2 Program Regulations

The Wisconsin Shares Child Care program is regulated under Chapter DCF 201 Administration of Child Care Funds (administrative code) and Wisconsin Statutes s. 49.155 Stats. The Department provides program oversight. Local availability of the program is facilitated through contractual relationship between the Department and tribes, counties, Wisconsin Works agencies, and the United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS).

1.1.3 Parental Choice

In the Wisconsin Shares Child Care program, parents choose their own child care providers. Parents may access information about child care providers, their program, and their rates through-out the state from Child Care Resource and Referral agencies.

1.1.4 Regulated Care Only

The Wisconsin Shares Child Care program only provides assistance for children who receive child care in regulated child care settings.

1.1.5 Parental Co-Payment

The Wisconsin Shares Child Care program pays only a portion of child care costs; under current law, parents are required to contribute to the cost of their child care through co-payments. Co-payments are determined based upon family income and size, and they are automatically deducted from the child care provider payment issued from the Department.

1.1.6 Additional Parental Costs

Parents are responsible for paying the difference between what the Wisconsin Shares program provides directly to their child care providers and the total cost of care. These costs include the co-payment amounts required under current law. In addition, parents may be assessed costs by the providers. A parent's share may be any of the following:



- The difference between a child care provider's rates and the combined total of the county maximum rate paid by the Wisconsin Shares program and the parental co-payment amount.
- If there are fees charged by the provider, such as fees for field trips or other activities.
- If child care is used during times that are not covered under an authorization or when a child is absent from care and the absence is not for an approved reason under Wisconsin Shares policy.
- If child care is used when the parents' eligibility for Wisconsin Shares child care has ended, including situations when the parent failed to notify the local child care administrative agency of changes in their circumstances that affect their eligibility or in other situations that may cause an overpayment to a child care provider.

1.1.7 Eligibility Determination

Parents apply for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance at their local Wisconsin Works or tribal agencies. Wisconsin Works agencies may subcontract eligibility determination to other agencies provided that the subcontract agency does not also provide child care.

1.1.8 Program Administration

Program administration is provided by county or tribal Income Maintenance agencies. County agencies may subcontract their functions to another agency, but only after obtaining approval from the Department. Counties may not subcontract administrative functions to agencies that also provide child care. Copies of all subcontracts must be provided to the Department.

County and tribal Wisconsin Shares child care administration includes, but is not limited, to the following functions:

- Providing a Child Care Coordinator for their county or tribe.
- Ensure that each new child care worker completes the department's initial training during the first six months of employment.
- Providing authorizations (vouchers) for child care payments.
- Adjusting authorizations when underutilized.
- Responding to child care provider requests for program information.



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- Representing the department in fair hearings.
- Monitoring authorization and other program expenditures.
- Confirming child care provider-reported attendance and entering attendance in the children CCPI system.
- Certifying child care providers.
- Maintaining child care provider records in the CSAW, including accurate W-9 forms for providers.
- Entering child care provider private rates (child care provider rates must be updated when submitted annually).
- Facilitating annual rate surveys, even when the department freezes the annual reimbursement rate.
- Providing information to parents regarding availability of providers.
- Reviewing parental eligibility every six months or whenever parents report changes that may affect their eligibility.

1.1.9 Confidentiality

No person may use or disclose information concerning applicants and recipients of the Wisconsin Shares child care assistance program for any purpose not connected with the administration of the program. Only the department grants exceptions.

1.1.10 Bureau of Early Childhood Education

The Bureau of Early Childhood Education (BECE), Division of Early Care and Education (ECE), Department of Children and Families (DCF) administers the Wisconsin Shares child care assistance program.



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1.2.0 Definitions

The following definitions are used for Wisconsin Shares Child Care Assistance Program.

A Break in Employment. Refers to a parent, relative, foster parent, guardian, or person acting in place of a parent who is working and will be returning to the same employer; self-employment is not included in the definition.

Absence. Authorized hours of care missed by a child.

Approved Absence. The absence is determined to meet criteria for a valid reason for absence.

Accredited. A child care provider or group center which meets higher quality of care standards under DCF 201.03 and 201.04, up to the maximums as determined by the department.

Adjusted Self Employment Income. The income the household receives from self-employment. This is calculated by subtracting allowable expenses from gross receipts.

Administrative Error. An error committed by an agency or the department in determining benefits issued for the Wisconsin Shares child care assistance program, that results in a overpayment (see client error definition).

Allowable Self-Employment Expenses. All expenses that the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) allows to be deducted from Gross Receipts, except for depreciation. This includes the cost of items sold and normal business expenses.

Assistance Group (AG). The Child Care Assistance Group (AG) consists of the individuals in the household who belong in the same case. (see Family Group Definition for specific details).

Attendance Report. This is a bi-weekly attendance report form sent by CARES to the authorized child care provider caring for the child subsidized with Wisconsin Shares payments. Attendance reports are also available on-line.

Authorization. This is a written agreement that the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy will pay the provider for child care under the terms specified in the agreement, including the effective dates of the authorization, the location of the provider, reimbursement amount, and type of payment.

CARES. (Client Assistance for Re-employment and Economic Support) The CARES system is a statewide, automated, integrated system that supports the major income



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maintenance programs of Wisconsin Works (W-2), Food Stamps (FS), Medical Assistance (MA), Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET), and Learnfare case management program by determining client eligibility, issuing benefits and managing support.

CCPC. Child Care Provider Certification

CCPI. Child Care Provider Information

Client Error. Errors caused by an individual who is a member of the Assistance Group reporting incorrect information or failing to report information due to misunderstanding or mistakes that result in an overpayment of Wisconsin Shares child care assistance.

CSAW. Child Care Statewide Administration (Web)

CWW. CARES Worker Web

Center Slots. Number of spaces for children within the licensed capacity of the child care center. "Center slots" or "slots" means the maximum number of children who may be cared for at any one time within the regulated capacity of a child care program.

Certified Provider - Regular. Child care providers who are certified by a county or tribe, but are not required to be licensed. These include family child care providers, and in-home providers. These providers have completed the entry level of training required by DCF 202.

Certified Provider - Provisional. Child care providers who are certified by a county or tribe, but are not required to be licensed. These include family child care providers, and in-home providers. These providers have not completed the entry level of training required by DCF 202, but they must complete some required training, specifically SIDS and Shaken Baby Syndrome.

Child Care Administrative Agency. Any agency that has a contract with the department to administer child care funds or any agency that has a subcontract to administer child care funds with an agency that has a contract with the department.

Child Care Funds. Funding for child care purposes under s. 49.155, Stats., excluding subs. (1d) and (1g).

Child Care Provider or "Provider." A provider licensed under s. 48.65, Stats., certified under s. 48.651, Stats., or established or contracted for under s. 120.13 (14), Stats.

Child Care Provider Price. The amount regularly charged by a provider to a parent who pays for the child care services out of his or her personal funds.



Child Care Worker. A person employed by a child care administrative agency whose duties include determining or re-determining child care subsidy eligibility, authorizing child care funds, making child care payments to providers, or determining and processing the recoupment of child care parent and provider overpayments.

Child Support. The local Title IV-D Child Support program including the following components for child and family support: locating parents; paternity establishment; establishing court orders for support and health care; and court order enforcement.

Co-Payment. Family responsibility payment based on family size, gross income, and number of children in child care as required under DCF 201.08. Copayments are system deducted from child care provider payments.

Custodial Parent for Assistance Groups. A parent who resides with the child, and, if there has been a determination of legal custody with respect to the dependent child, has legal custody of the child.

Department. The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) (created effective July 1, 2008).

Dependent Child. A person who resides with a parent or person acting in place of a parent and who is under the age of 18 or, if the person is a full-time student at a high school or a vocational or technical equivalent and is reasonably expected to complete the program before attaining the age of 19.

Differential Co-payment. The co-payment calculation method used for retro authorization in which the full co-payment for one child is applied to the child with the longest retro period authorization and the difference is applied to the other children for the length of the retro authorization period.

Disability. Any mental or physical impairment which prevents a person from or makes it unusually difficult to participate in major life activities such as walking, talking, thinking, breathing, hearing, seeing, eating, working, or self-care, as verified by a licensed psychologist or physician.

Divisor. The amount of hours of care to be considered full-time, which is 35 hours per week.

Effective Dates. The period for which child care is authorized. Authorizations are between 1 week and 6 months in length.



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Eligibility Period. The term for which an assistance group has been found eligible for Wisconsin Share. Eligibility periods do not exceed 6 months.

Equal Opportunity Coordinator. A person, designated by the Department, county agencies and boards, and other subcontractors, to coordinate efforts to comply with requirements for equal opportunity.

Family or Family Group. Is the Assistance Group that is defined as an individual who is a custodial parent or placement parent and their dependent children and all dependent children with respect to whom the individual's dependent child is a custodial parent. Family or Family Group includes any nonmarital coparent or any spouse of the individual who resides in the same household as the individual and any dependent children with respect to whom the spouse or nonmarital coparent is a custodial parent. Family or Family Group does not include any person who is receiving benefits from relief block grant funds under s. 49.027 (3) (b). A grandparent who has guardianship of both (their adult child and their adult child's child may all be included in the same Assistance Group.

Federal Poverty Level (FPL). The federal government's statistical poverty threshold used in the gross income test to determine financial eligibility.

Fellowship. Money granted by a university, foundation, or other agency for advanced study or research.

Financial and Employment Planner (FEP). A case manager employed or contracted for a W-2 agency who provides eligibility determination, job readiness screening, employability planning, financial and employment case management services, makes referrals to other public or private assistance programs or resources, and determines eligibility for child care, unless subcontracted to a county agency.

Food Share Employment and Training Program (FSET). The program established under s. 49.13, Stats., for the purpose of helping food share recipients develop marketable work skills and obtain gainful employment.

Foster Parent. A person licensed under s. 48.62 (a), Stats.

Gross Receipts from Self-Employment. All money paid to the self-employed person.

Income. Money, wages or salary, adjusted income from self-employment, social security, dividends, interest on savings or bonds, income from estates or trusts, net rental income or royalties, public assistance, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), pensions and annuities, unemployment insurance, worker's compensation, alimony and other maintenance payments, and veteran pensions.



In-Home Provider. A regulated child care provider caring for a child in the child's own home.

Interim Caretaker. A caretaker who has been appointed by the Department of Children and Families to replace a subsidized guardian when the subsidized guardian is no longer able to provide care for a specific foster child.

Intentional Program Violation. An individual who is a member of the Wisconsin Shares child care assistance group intentionally making a false or misleading statement or misrepresented, concealed, or withheld facts that resulted in an overpayment under the Wisconsin Shares child care assistance program. An intentional program violation may be determined based upon an administrative hearing, a court finding, a signed waiver of an administrative hearing for an alleged intentional program violation, or consent agreement in lieu of prosecution based on the same facts or events as the intentional program violation.

Kinship Care. A program to provide monthly payments to support a child who is being provided care and maintenance by a close relative, called a kinship care relative. The county social services or human services department approves the payment if it is determined that the child needs to be placed with the relative, the placement is in the best interests of the child, and the relative meets specified conditions.

Kinship Care Relative. A relative who may or may not be receiving kinship care benefits and who is one of the following: a stepparent, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, first cousin, nephew, niece, aunt, uncle or any grand person of a preceding generation as denoted by the prefix of grand, great or great-great, whether by having the same ancestor, direct affinity or legal adoption, or the spouse of any person named in this paragraph, even if the marriage is terminated by death or divorce.

Kinship Care Relative – Long-Term. Has the same meaning as the kinship care relative definition above and also has the additional requirement that the relative must have a court ordered guardianship under s. 48.977 Statutes.

Kinship Care – Court-Ordered. When a kinship care relative is receiving Kinship Care benefits for a child that is in their care under a Children in Need of Protection or Services (CHIPS), CH 48, or CH 54/880 guardianship.

Learnfare. A program to assist school-age, dependent, students 6 through 17 years of age, who are in a W-2 group to attend school regularly and to graduate from school when an adult in the group is participating in a W-2 employment position. The program requires all preteens in pilot counties designated by the department and teenagers to attend school.



Migrant. A farmworker who travels from another state to Wisconsin or within Wisconsin for the purpose of engaging in agricultural or agricultural-related industry, who has or will work on a seasonal basis which requires travel, such that the farmworker is unable to return to his/her primary place of residence within the same day.

Minimum Wage. The state minimum hourly wage as stated in Ch. 104 Wisconsin Stats.

Non-Custodial Parent. With respect to a dependent child, a parent who is not the custodial parent. This is the definition under 49.141 (1) for the W-2 program.

Non-Marital Co-Parent. With respect to an individual and a dependent child, parent who is not married to the individual, resides with the dependent child and is either an adjudicated parent or a parent who has signed and filed with the state registrar under s. 69.15 (3) (b) 3. a statement acknowledging paternity.

Non-Placement Parent. The parent who does not have court ordered responsibility for the physical care of the child during the time for which child care is requested.

Overpayment. Money that the Wisconsin Shares program paid for the care of a child that was more than program requirements indicated should have been paid.

Parent. A custodial or placement parent, or biological, adoptive, foster, or treatment foster parent, legal custodian, subsidized guardian or interim caretaker of a child under s. 48.62(5) Stats in Milwaukee County, Kinship Care Relative, or person acting in place of a parent.

Parent Choice. The parent's right to choose any regulated provider or to have the current provider complete the certification process for child care under the Wisconsin Shares program.

Parent Share. The difference between the provider's private pay price (actual cost of care) and the authorized amount that includes the system-deducted co-pay; includes both the co-pay and any additional child care prices.

Participant. A parent or any other member of the assistance group.

Person Acting in Place of a Parent. A non-related adult who does not meet the definition of a kinship care relative in this section who is caring for a child on a 24 hour basis and who is taking the place of a parent when the parent is unavailable by means of physical absence from the home.



Physical Placement. The situation under which a child is physically living with an adult who is fulfilling a parental role.

Positive or Negative Adjustment. Increased or decreased payment made to a provider to correct a previous under/over payment.

Provider Price. The amount regularly charged by a provider to a family who pays for services from personal funds.

Qualified Alien. A qualified alien must meet one of the following criteria:

1. An alien lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence under the Immigration and Nationality Act;
2. An alien who is granted asylum under section 208 of such Act;
3. A refugee who is admitted to the United States under section 207 of such Act;
4. An alien who has been certified as a victim of trafficking;
5. An alien who is paroled into the United States under section 212(d)(5) of such Act for a period of at least one year;
6. An alien whose deportation is being withheld under section 243(h) or 241(b)(3) of such Act;
7. Cuban and Haitian aliens, as defined in section 501(e) of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980;
8. An American Indian born in Canada who is at least 50% American Indian by blood, or an American Indian born outside of the United States who is a member of a federally recognized Indian tribe;
9. An alien who has been battered or whose child has been battered, who is no longer residing in the same household with the batterer, and who meets the requirements of 8 USC 1641(c);
10. An alien who is granted conditional entry pursuant to section 203(a)(7) of such Act as in effect prior to April 1, 1980;
11. Amerasian Immigrants, as defined in section 584 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act of 1988.
12. An alien who is lawfully residing and is one of the following: An armed forces veteran who received an honorable discharge that was not on account of alienage and who completed either 24 months of continuous active duty or the full period for which the individual was called, unless the individual received a hardship discharge under 10 USC 1173, early discharge under 10 USC 1171, or a discharge due to a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty. On active duty in the armed forces of the United States, other than active duty for training. The spouse of an individual described in subdivision a. or b., or the un-remarried surviving spouse of an individual described in subdivision a. or b. if the marriage was for one year or more or the individual had a child in common.
13. An alien who is lawfully residing in the United States and authorized to work by the immigration and naturalization service.



Rate. The maximum amount a provider will be paid in a county or tribe.

Regulated Child Care. Child care providers licensed by the state, certified by the county or tribe, or who are operated by a public school board.

Reimbursement. Payment for services provided by the child care provider.

Relative. Immediate family is defined as, and limited to the child's parents, step-parents, foster parents, kinship care caretaker, appointed guardian in Milwaukee County, first cousins, or grandparents; the parents children, step-children, grandchildren, foster children, adopted children, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, uncles, and aunts.

Required Fee. Any amount of money the family is required to pay toward child care costs, including family copayments, gap payments, and incidental fees.

School. A school is:

1. Public school.
2. Private school.
3. DPI registered home school program.
4. Vocational, Technical and Adult Education (VTAE) school.
5. DPI approved high school equivalency course.
6. Program leading to a GED.
7. Regular study of English as a Second Language.
8. Accredited post secondary institutions.

School Bank Hours. Hours available on days during the regular school year when classes are not in session because school is not open for short term periods (excludes summer break).

Self-Employment Income. The same as "Adjusted Self-Employment Income".

Shared Placement. The situation when a child has physical placement in more than one location with more than one adult.

Sleep Shift. Authorized hours of care for third shift employment to cover the period of time the parent is sleeping during the day.

Special Need. An emotional, behavioral, physical, or personal need of a child requiring more than the usual amount of care and supervision for the child's age, as documented by a physician, psychologist, special educator, or other qualified licensed professional. A "special need" includes a developmental disability.



Special Health Condition. An emotional, behavioral, or physical, condition of a child as diagnosed by a licensed physician.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI). This program provides income to persons with disabilities who meet program criteria.

Strike. Any concerted stoppage of work by employees (including stoppage by reason of the expiration of collective bargaining agreement), and concerted slow down or other concerted interruption of operations by employees.

Student. An adult student in an accredited educational program.

Temporary Absence from Approved Activities. When a person is not participating in their approved activity. Temporary absence may be approved or granted “good cause” for the absence or they may be denied.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Title I of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA). The federal block grant program that provides states with the authority and funding to create programs that provide time-limited assistance to needy families with children and promote work.

Title IV-E Foster Care. Federal funds used for payments made for dependent children placed in foster homes.

Treatment Foster Parent. A person licensed under by the state of Wisconsin, a county department, or a licensed child welfare agency to provide care and maintenance and structured, professional treatment for children.

Tribe. A Wisconsin American Indian tribe recognized by the federal government.

Two Parent Households. A two- parent household consists of either married parents or non-married co-parents.

Unregulated Child Care. Child care providers who are not licensed by the state, certified by the county/tribe, or operated by a public school board.

Unsubsidized Employment. Employment for which a W-2 agency provides no subsidy to the employer, including self-employment and entrepreneurship for purposes other than “holding a slot”.

Voucher. An authorization for reimbursement.



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Wisconsin Works (W-2). Wisconsin's TANF block grant program for families with dependent children.

Wisconsin Works Agency or W-2 Agency. A person, county agency, tribal governing body, or a private agency contracted under s. 49.143, Stats., by the department to administer the Wisconsin works program under ss. 49.141 to 49.161, Stats., and this Chapter.

Wisconsin Works (W-2) Employment Position. A Trial Job, Community Service Job or Transitional placement subsidized by the W-2 agency.

Weekly Ceiling. The county/tribal weekly reimbursement rate as determined by a survey of licensed child care providers. The weekly ceiling is the price at which 75% of the child care slots in a geographic areas can be purchased.



1.3.0 Application Process

1.3.1 Request for Assistance (RFA)

The Filing Date is set when either the agency receives a signed Request For Assistance (RFA) generated by Client Registration in CWW, a DCF-F-DWSP-14880 (R. 01/2009) (Wisconsin Works and Related Programs Registration), or the date the application interview is conducted; whichever comes first. When applicants call to schedule an application interview appointment, the agency should either mail the RFA (if Client Registration is done over the phone) or a DCF-F-DWSP-14880 to the applicant or make the form available to be signed in the office. Applicants should be informed that their date of application will be based upon the receipt of the signed form or the date of the interview.

The DCF-F-DWSP-14880 can be found at:

http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/forms/dcf_f_dwsp14880.htm

Once the agency receives a signed RFA, an intake interview appointment must be scheduled to take place with the applicant within five (5) business days.

If an intake interview is not conducted within thirty days, the RFA is considered expired.

Intake interviews may be held on either a face-to-face basis or via a telephone unless one of the following conditions exists:

1. The applicant requests a face-to-face interview.
2. The agency has decided to conduct all intake interviews for their agency on a face-to-face basis.
3. The applicant has had a previous Intentional Program Violation in the Wisconsin Shares or Wisconsin Works programs.

1.3.2 Telephone Interviews

Local agencies should establish similar processes for scheduling telephone interviews as they have for scheduling face-to-face interviews. Appointment times should continue to be scheduled so agencies and customers are able to prepare and be available for the telephone interview.

At the scheduled appointment time, the worker should contact the interviewee at the telephone number confirmed in the interview appointment notice. When the customer



answers the telephone, the worker should identify her/himself by name and local agency office. Use the intake or review driver flow in CWW to conduct the interview. Advise the customer of the verification items that they will need and their change reporting requirements. If the assistance group will be subject to six-month reporting, explain the six-month report form and process to receive on-going benefits.

If the first attempt to contact the customer is unsuccessful, try contacting the customer within 15 minutes of the first call. If the second attempt is unsuccessful, document in case comments that the customer was unavailable at the appointment time and when the follow up call was made. Send the Notice of Missed Interview to the customer to reschedule.

For an application to be considered complete, the applicant must sign the Combined Application Form (CAF). If the interview is done in person, have the applicant sign the form at the end of the interview. If the interview is done by phone, mail the CAF to the applicant and instruct the applicant to sign and return the CAF within 10 days. Enter a "?" in the Signature Details section of the General Case Information page in CWW if the CAF is not yet signed. This will put the case in pending status. If after 10 days there is still not a signed CAF, change the "?" to "N" which will deny eligibility due to lack of a signature (Reason Code 045).

It is not necessary for applicant signatures to be witnessed by an agency representative for the application to be considered complete.

Applicants who sign their CAF in person must produce verification to identify that they are the applicants.

Applicants may return their signed CAF to the agency in person, through a FAX process, or via the mail.

The applicant has seven (7) business days from the intake interview to produce the required verification for the agency.

If the applicant is having difficulty obtaining the required verification, the agency may grant a thirty (30) calendar day extension from the filing date.

Wisconsin Works or County/Tribal agencies are required to assist applicants who are experiencing difficulties obtaining birth certificates or social security numbers.

1.3.3 Application/Review Interview Details Page

Workers must document on the Application /Review Interview Details Page the type of interview they have with customers for either intake/program add or reviews for child



care assistance. Refer to Ops Memo 08-31 for page entry instructions. Interview codes for child care include:

“?-Pending Interview”-pends the CC AG and verification checklist can be requested and sent to the applicant to let the applicant know they must complete an interview.

“F-Face to Face”-allows the interview to county for child care.

“N-No Interview”- indicates that no interview was conducted for child care.

“T-Telephone”-allows the interview to count for child care.

1.3.4 Missing Verification

If verification has not been received from the applicant within seven (7) business days, the agency should code the missing verification item as “Not Verified” in Cares Worker Web (CWW) and run eligibility. This will generate a Denial Notice alerting the applicant the case is being denied pending the receipt of the missing verification.

A list of missing verification items must then be sent to the applicant.

If the missing verification is received within thirty (30) days of the last day of the application month, eligibility may be run with the verification coded as complete. (See Verification Section)

The authorization may be backdated to the RFA date or the last Sunday of the month prior to the RFA date if the verification is received within thirty days of the last day of the application month if the appropriate individuals in the AG were in an approved activity during the backdated timeframe.

1.3.5 Delayed Approved Activity Start Date

If the applicant is not yet in an approved activity but verifies that they will be in one the following month, code the approved activity in Cares Worker Web with the Effective Month equal to the month in which the approved activity begins. This will start eligibility in the months of the approved activity.

Example:

Mary applies for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance on May 28, 2008 but does not start her job until June 10th, 2008. The worker enters the approved activity (EMPL) on the Child Care Activity Statue page with an effective date of 06-2008. Mary will be denied eligibility for the month of May, but will be eligible beginning in June.



1.3.6 Eligibility Determination

Once the verification has been determined to be complete, the agency has seven (7) business days to determine eligibility. Eligibility may be backdated only to the first of the month of the application filing date, unless the applicant requested an intake appointment and was given an appointment for the following month; in this situation eligibility may be backdated to the first of the month that the agency received a signed request for child care assistance (RFA or DWSP-14880).

1.3.6.1 Cases Closed for Thirty (30) Days or Longer

If a Wisconsin Shares child care assistance case is closed for a calendar month the parent or person acting in the place of a parent must re-apply for child care assistance.

1.3.7 Program Add

If the applicant has already been determined eligible for Foodshare or Wisconsin Medical Assistance and they request Wisconsin Shares child care assistance before their next review, the applicant must sign a new Request for Assistance.

- Eligibility may be determined back to the first of the month of the add-on request.
- The Wisconsin Works or County/Tribal agency may conduct either a face-to-face or telephone interview for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance contingent upon the criteria cited in the previous section.
- The applicant has seven (7) working days from the program add interview to produce verification of the approved activity.
- The Wisconsin Works or County/Tribal agency may grant a thirty calendar day extension for persons who are having difficulty obtaining verification.

1.3.8 Assistance Groups

Assistance Groups are defined as an individual who is a custodial parent or placement parent, and their dependent children, and all dependent children with respect to whom the individual's dependent child is a custodial parent.

The Assistance Group also includes any nonmarital coparent or any spouse of the individual who resides in the same household as the individual, and any dependent children with respect to whom the spouse or nonmarital coparent is a custodial parent.

The individual who is a custodial parent or placement must be at least eighteen years old unless they are living in a supervised independent living situation and attending high school or its equivalent as defined later in this manual, or lives independently and is employed, or is married.



An Assistance Group must include the children's custodial parent and may not include relatives who may be taking care of the children if the custodial parent is living in the household.

Custodial parent for Assistance Groups is defined as a parent who resides with the child, and, if there has been a determination of legal custody with respect to the dependent child, has legal custody of the child.

1.3.9 Assistance Group (AG) Compositions:

1. An individual who is a custodial or placement parent, or kinship care relative, who is at least 18 years old; or a foster parent; or, a subsidized guardianship provider (or interim caretaker) in Milwaukee County; and, within the same household, and
 - all of their dependent children, and all dependent children of their children who are a custodial or placement parent; and,
 - any non-marital co-parent of their dependent child (ren), and any dependent children of the non-marital co-parent; and/or
 - the spouse of the parent, kinship care relative, foster parent, or subsidized guardian or interim caretaker in Milwaukee County, living in the household, and any dependent children of the of the spouse, and
 - any adult child(ren) and their dependent child(ren) for whom a parent has guardianship of both the adult and their dependent child.

AG Type	Examples
Parent	A mother and child. <i>The AG consists of the mother and the child.</i>
Parent - Three Generation	A grandmother, a minor mother, and the minor's baby. <i>The AG consists of the grandmother, the minor mother, and the baby.</i>
Parent - Three Generation/Kinship Care Relative	A grandmother, a minor mother, and the minor's baby. The grandmother receives kinship care for the baby and is also the baby's guardian. The AG consists of the grandmother, the minor mother, and the baby.
Parent - Related Adult in Home	A grandmother, an adult mother, and the adult mother's baby live in the same house. <i>The AG consists of the</i>



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	<i>adult mother and her baby. The grandmother is not in the AG unless the grandparent has guardianship of both the adult mother and her dependent child (see next example).</i>
Adult Parent – Grandparent in Home	A grandparent has legal guardianship of their adult daughter and her child. The AG consists of the grandparent, the adult child, and the child. This AG exception is allowed only when a parent has legal guardianship of both their adult child and their adult child's dependent child.
Grandparent - Adult Mother Moves Back Into Home	A grandmother has guardianship of her 2 year old granddaughter. A child welfare worker reunites the 2 year old with her adult mother in the grandmother's home. <i>Once the adult mother moved into the house the AG must change because the mother and grandmother cannot be in the same AG, even though she has court ordered guardianship. Eligibility for the grandmother ends; the mother must apply for child care.</i>
Shared Placement	Jenny is an adult and she has one child who is in her home on a shared placement basis. <i>The AG consists of Jenny and her child.</i>
Grandparent	
Parent/Adopted Child	Martha and her adopted special needs infant. <i>The AG consists of Martha and her infant.</i>
Shared Placement	<p>Jessica and Mathew have share placement of Megan, age 11. Jessica has two other children living with her. Mathew lives with Betty and they have 1 child together.</p> <p><i>Jessica's AG consists of herself, Megan, and Jessica's two other children.</i></p> <p><i>Mathews AG consists of himself, Megan, Betty, and their one child in common.</i></p>
Parent/Related Adults Not in AG	Gary is an adult who lives with his 2 year old son named James and Gary's sister and her husband and four children. <i>The AG consists of Gary and James.</i>
Parent/Unrelated Adult not in AG	Sally lives with her twin sons Oscar and Juliano and her boyfriend Henry. <i>Sally's AG consists of herself, Oscar and Juliano.</i>
Parent with Children	Sally lives with her twin sons Oscar and Juliano, and



and Non-Marital Co-Parent	her boyfriend Henry. Sally and Henry have a baby, Felicity. Henry is Felicity's adjudicated father. <i>Sally's AG now consists of herself, Oscar, Juliano, Felicity, and Henry.</i>
Three Generation Case Plus Spouse	Jessica is a 17 year old mother who is attending high school and needs child care for her infant. Jessica lives with her mother Lynda and Lynda's husband Matt. <i>The AG consists of Lynda, Jessica, Jessica's infant, and Matt.</i>
Children Only are US Citizens or Qualified Aliens	Juanita and Carlos work fulltime but are not US citizens or qualified aliens. Juanita has applied for child care for their two children under age 12, both who are US citizens. The AG consists of Juanita, Carlos, and the two children.
Kinship Care Relative	Uncle Joe is raising Amy, who is the six year old child of his sister. He receives Kinship Care assistance for Amy. <i>The AG consists of Uncle Joe and Amy.</i>
Kinship Care Relative	Aunt Kathryn is raising her nephew Mark, age 4. She is married and her husband Lenny and her have three minor children of their own. Kathryn receives Kinship Care assistance for Mark. <i>The AG consists of Kathryn, Lenny, their three children, and Mark.</i>
Subsidized Guardian in Milwaukee County	Marilyn is a subsidized guardian for Jimmy who is 10 years old. Marilyn is married to Jeff. They live in Milwaukee County. <i>The AG consists of Marilyn, Jeff, and Jimmy.</i>
Foster Care	Kathy is a single, foster parent who works fulltime and needs child care for her two foster children Angela age 3 and Mattie age 4. <i>The AG consists of Kathy and her two foster children.</i>
Foster Care	Darlene is a single foster parent who needs child care for her two foster children Angela age 3 and Mattie age 4 <u>and</u> her own two children Mike age 10 and Donny age 11. <i>The AG consists of Darlene, Mike, Donny, Angela, and Mattie.</i>

2. A person acting in the place of a parent who is a non-related adult, and within the same household, and
 - all of the child's dependent siblings, and,



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- all of the applicant's dependent children, and all dependent children of their children who are a custodial or placement parent; and,
- the spouse of the person taking the place of the parent, and any dependent children of the spouse.

Examples:

Cathy and Bill live together and are not married. Cathy has one child age 4 named Sally. Bill is not Sally's father. Bill has a child named Lisa, age 5. Cathy is not Lisa's mother. *The AG consists of Cathy and Sally in one case and Bill and Lisa in a separate case.*

Cathy is then in a car accident and is hospitalized for 3 weeks. She will be off of work for an additional 4 months. Cathy's situation does not meet the criteria for agency approval to hold the slot open for Sally because Cathy will not be returning to work within 6 weeks. Bill will continue to take care of Sally, but her eligibility for child care ended the month that her mother was hospitalized.

Bill may apply for child care for Sally as a person taking the place of a parent, and may be eligible for her care for the duration that Cathy is hospitalized. *If Bill applies for child care, his AG would consist of Bill, Sally, and Lisa. Cathy would not be in the AG and considered temporarily out of the home because she cannot be part of Bill's case unless they establish a legal relationship with each other.*

Jane has a 7 year old daughter named Linda. Jane goes into a treatment center, leaving Linda with her friend Maggie. Jane will be out of the home for an indefinite period of time. Maggie may apply for child care as a person taking the place of a parent. *The AG consists of Maggie and Linda.*

-
3. A minor parent who lives in a licensed group home who is attending high school and their dependent child (ren).

Example:

Sally is 17 years old and lives in a group home with her baby, Jesse. Sally attends high school. The AG consists of Sally and Jesse.

4. A minor parent who lives in a supervised independent living situation and is attending high school, and within the same household,
 - Any non-marital co-parent of their dependent child (ren), and any dependent children of the non-marital co-parent.

**Example:**

Karen is 17 and lives with her son Mathew, age 2 and the baby's father, John, age 18. They all live with John's father. Karen hasn't lived at home with her parents in five years. Karen attends high school, and John works full time. Paternity has been established on John. *The AG consists of Karen, John, and Mathew.*

5. A minor parent who lives independently and is employed, and their dependent child(ren), and within the same household,
- any non-marital co-parent of their dependent child (ren), and any dependent children of the non-marital co-parent.

Example:

Mary is 17 and lives with her daughter Amy, age 2 and the baby's father, John, age 18. Amy and John work full time. Paternity has been established on John. *The AG consists of Karen, John, and Mathew.*

6. A minor parent who is married and the marriage is recognized under Wisconsin law, and, within the same household,
- their dependent child(ren); and
 - the spouse of the minor parent, and any dependent children of the spouse.

Example:

Kathy and Jacob are both 17. They are married and have one child, Annie, who is 6 months old. Jacob has a son, Drew, age 3 who lives with them. *The AG consists of Kathy, Jacob, Drew, and Annie.*

1.3.10 Fathers Who Have Not Had Paternity Established and Assistance Groups

Exclude fathers that live in the home from the Assistance Group until their paternity has been established. See Definitions section, "Non-Marital Co-Parent."

1.3.11 Relatives and Parents and Assistance Groups

Exclude relatives from the Assistance Group that live in the home if the parent is also living in the home. If a relative has been receiving child care assistance while the parent was out of the home and the parent returns to the home, the relative's eligibility ends because the parent is back in the home. The returning parent may apply for child care assistance.



1.4.0 Non-Financial Eligibility Requirements

1.4.1 Applicant's Relationship to Child

The applicant must be a parent, foster parent, kinship care relative, subsidized guardian or interim caretaker in Milwaukee County, or a person acting in place of a parent (see Definitions Section).

1.4.2 Applicant Age

The applicant must be at least 18 years of age unless one of the following situations apply:

1. They are living in a group home licensed by the State of Wisconsin or an approved independent living situation, and are enrolled and participating in high school or an equivalent program approved by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction; or,
2. They are living independently and employed; or,
3. They are married in a marriage recognized under Wisconsin law.

1.4.3 Age Limits for Child

The childcare assistance must be for a child age 12 and under, or up to age 19 if the child has a verified special needs (see Definition Section).

1.4.4 Wisconsin Residency

The applicant is a resident of Wisconsin and intends to remain in Wisconsin unless they are a migrant worker (see the Migrant Worker Section).

Applicants must apply at the W-2 agency (or its subcontract agency) in the geographic area in which they live, or at their tribal agency.

1.4.5 Child is a US Citizen or Qualified Alien

The child care assistance is for a child who is a US citizen or is a qualified alien. (see Definition Section for qualified alien).

1.4.6 Applicant Must Provide Verification within Seven (7) Days

The applicant provides the required verification for application within seven (7) business days unless the eligibility determining agency extends the verification timeline (see the Eligibility Determination Section).



1.4.7 Child Support Cooperation

All parents in the Assistance Group (AG) must fully cooperate with Title IV-D child support enforcement for paternity establishment and support collections for all children that they are a custodial or noncustodial parent of whether the child is part of the Assistance Group or not, except under the following circumstances: foster parent or subsidized guardians in Milwaukee county for foster children or court ordered kinship care relatives for their court ordered kinship care children. .

Cooperation is determined by the Title IV-D child support enforcement agency.

An individual who is a member of the AG who fails 3 times to meet the child support cooperation requirement remains ineligible until all of the members of the AG cooperate or for a period of 6 months, whichever is later.

1.4.8 Participation in Approved Activities

Every parent in the family/Assistance Group (AG) must need child care to participate in an approved activity or activities(s) (see Approved Activities Section).

1.4.8.1 Single Parent Participation in Approved Activities

Single parents who are not able to participate in approved activities are not eligible for Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy unless they have been in an approved activity and receiving child care assistance and have been approved by the agency as meeting the department's criteria for holding a slot for a child.

1.4.8.2 Two-Parent Families and Three Generation Families and Participation in Approved Activities

In two-parent families both parents in the AG, including step parents and non-marital co-parents, must be participating in approved activities, unless one parent is participating in approved activities and the other parent is unable to participate in an approved activity due to a disability or health condition and is unable to care for the child (ren) so that the other parent could participate, due to a disability or health condition . The parent's inability to both care for their children and participate in approved activities must be verified by a doctor, psychiatrist, or psychologist.

Eligibility for child care is only for the overlapping hours when both parents are in approved activities.

This requirement also applies to three-generation families where all the minor parents and grandparents in the AG must be participating in approved activities.

**Examples:**

Mary and John have two children, ages 1 and 3, who need child care assistance so that Mary can keep her employment. John drove a delivery van for UPS but is now temporarily not able to work due to a back injury. His doctor wrote a letter to verify that John's back injury specifically prohibits him from being able to take care of his children due to a lifting restriction and also that he cannot work at any job that requires lifting. Mary and John meet the non-financial requirement for participation in approved activities for two parent families.

A grandmother and her husband, the grandmother's teen daughter, and the grandmother's grandchild live in one household. The teenage daughter, who is the mother of the child, attends high school. Grandfather is employed full time second shift. The grandmother is not employed and has a history of alcohol and drug abuse. The grandmother does not have an excuse from a doctor, psychiatrist, or psychologist stating that she cannot work and she cannot take care of her grandchild. She does not meet the non-financial criteria for two-parent family eligibility criteria.

1.5.0 Approved Activities for Wisconsin Shares Child Care Assistance

1.5.1 Learnfare

Meeting Learnfare Program school attendance requirements.

1.5.2 High School

The parent is age 19 or younger, is not subject to Learnfare Program requirements, and is enrolled in high school or a course that is approved by the state superintendent of public instruction for granting a high school graduation equivalency subject to the following restrictions:

- If the individual is under the age of 18 they must be living with their parent, or kinship care relative, or in a foster or treatment foster home meeting Wisconsin licensing standards, in a subsidized guardianship or interim caretaker home in Milwaukee County, or in an independent living arrangement approved by a licensed or public child welfare, social service, or state corrections agency and supervised by an adult, or are married.
- Supervised independent living situations must be documented in CARES case comments.



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- Supervised independent living situations for minors may not be in the same location as their parents or guardians, including the same address or apartment building.
- In independent living arrangements the adult does not have to be living in the home with the student if the student is at least 17 years old and the adult supervision is provided by a kinship care relative, or their former foster parent, subsidized guardian or interim caretaker, or a representative from a licensed private or public child welfare, social service, or state corrections agency.
- Online high school equivalency courses are contingent upon the child care authorizing agency's approval. Verification of the student's satisfactory progress is required and the worker shall enter appropriate case comments in CARES.
- Participation under this section does not apply to the 24 month limit for educational approved activities. The 24 month restriction applies only for high school equivalency students age 20 and older.

1.5.3 Unsubsidized Employment

Work in an unsubsidized job, including training provided by an employer during the regular hours of employment.

The Wisconsin Shares Child Care Assistance program recognizes only two categories of unsubsidized employment for meeting non-financial eligibility criteria and for receiving assistance as either:

- 1) Working for a qualified employer who has a Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN), or
- 2) Being legitimately self-employed.

All hours per week of unsubsidized employment, the schedule shift if second or third, and hours allocated for transportation must be documented in CARES Worker Web in case comments, on the employment page or in the Electronic Case File to substantiate the need for the child care assistance hours authorized. Indicate if the hours vary on a weekly basis.

Documenting employment schedules is required for both types of unsubsidized employment: working for a qualified employer or legitimate self-employment. If a qualified employer has provided verification of the individual's hours per week of



employment there is no need for them to also provide verification of a work schedule unless the worker finds the employment questionable.

The program definitions for “qualified employers” and “legitimate self-employment” are described below and reflect current Wisconsin Wage and Unemployment Insurance law:

1.5.3.1 Qualified Employers

All qualified employers must have a FEIN documented in the individual’s CARES Worker Web record for the verification of the unsubsidized employment to be considered complete.

If the FEIN is already on file on the Employment Page or the worker knows the FEIN for the employer, the employer does not have to re-verify the number unless the worker believes that the FEIN is incorrect.

Incorrect FEINs are considered incomplete verification (See Section 1.3.4 Missing Verification for incomplete verification steps for new applicants, Program Adds, SMRFs and Reviews.

If the employer is a child care provider or a business owned or managed by the provider, or if the reported employment appears to be questionable, the following employer items must be verified. Please refer to the Appendix for suggested verification steps.

- The employer must have a Worker’s Compensation insurance policy for its employees unless legally exempt.
- The employer must comply with Wisconsin minimum wage law for all employees.
- The employer must file a New Hire report on the employee within thirty days of the hiring date.
- The employer must report wages to Unemployment Insurance unless exempt.

1.5.3.2 Pre-Job Training

Pre-job training may be covered by the Wisconsin Shares program if all of the following conditions are met:

- The training is limited to no more than two weeks in length (training that exceeds two weeks is not allowed as an approved activity),



- The job seeker is guaranteed a job from a qualified employer upon successful completion of the training, and
- The agency determines that the training and job offer represents a legitimate employment opportunity and documents the finding in CARES case comments.

1.5.3.3 Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are considered allowable forms of unsubsidized employment if all of the following conditions are met:

- There is an apprenticeship contract signed by the applicant, employer, and Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development.
- The Wisconsin Shares child care assistance is allowable for classroom and employment time covered by the contract provided all other eligibility criteria is met.

Apprenticeship participants are required under current law to receive at least the minimum wage while participating in classroom and on-the-job training.

Coursework taken prior to the period of time covered under the paid portion of the apprenticeship contract does not qualify as unsubsidized employment, but may qualify as meeting the approved activity criteria for participating in either basic education, English as a Second Language, GED/HSED, technical college, or other course of study, all of which required five hours per week of unsubsidized employment (See Basic Education and Course of Study at A Technical College as Approved Activities).

1.5.3.4 Sheltered Employment

Employment at a sheltered workshop licensed under s. 104.07(2), Wis. Stats, is considered unsubsidized employment and an allowable activity if the parent is the sole caretaker of a dependent child in need of child care to allow the parent to be employed.

1.5.3.5 Work Study

Work study is not considered qualified unsubsidized employment as a stand alone activity unless the individual has also been approved to participate in education as an approved activity (see Approved Activities #7).

1.5.3.6 Youth Employment

Youth employment is considered an approved activity for minor parents who live with a parent, foster parent, kinship care relative, subsidized guardian or interim caretaker, or



person taking the place of a parent contingent upon all other nonfinancial and financial eligibility criteria being met.

1.5.3.7 Legitimate Self-Employment

See Child Care Manual Chapter 3, Section 3.6.1.1 for authorization restrictions for self-employment.

Self-employment as an unregulated child care provider is not allowable as an approved activity for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance eligibility.

If the validity of the self employment is in doubt, seven or more of the following conditions must be met by the applicant:

1. The individual holds or has applied for an identification number with the federal Internal Revenue Service.
2. The individual has filed business or self-employment tax returns with the federal Internal Revenue Service based on such services in the previous year or, in the case of a new business, in the year in which such services were first performed.
3. The individual maintains a separate business with his or her own office, equipment, materials, and other facilities.
4. The individual operates under contracts to perform specific services for specific amounts of money and under which the individual controls the means and methods of performing such services.
5. The individual incurs the main expenses related to the services that he or she performs under contract.
6. The individual is responsible for the satisfactory completion of services that he or she contracts to perform and is liable for a failure to satisfactorily complete the services.
7. The individual receives compensation for services performed under a contract on a commission or per-job basis and not on any other basis.
8. The individual may realize a profit or suffer a loss under contracts to perform such services.
9. The individual has recurring business liabilities or obligations.
10. The success or failure of the individual's business depends on the relationship of business receipts to expenditures.

1.5.4. Wisconsin Works or Tribal TANF Employment Position

Work in a Wisconsin Works employment position, including participating in job search, orientation and training activities under unsubsidized employment, and in education or training activities for trial jobs, community service jobs, or transitional placements.

Tribal TANF participants must meet Wisconsin W-2 financial and non-financial eligibility requirements to be eligible for child care assistance.



1.5.5 FSET

Participate in the job search, training, or work experience component of the FoodShare Employment and Training Program (FSET).

1.5.6. Basic Education

Participate in basic education, including English as a Second Language, literacy tutoring, or a course that is approved by the state superintendent of public instruction for granting a high school graduation equivalency if approved by the Wisconsin Works or its subcontracted eligibility determination agency and if the individual is also employed no less than five (5) hours per week/20 hours per month in an unsubsidized job.

- A school and work schedule is required for all participants.
- The applicant/child care authorizing agency must determine that the basic education will provide an employment skill that facilitates the employed individual's efforts to maintain their current position or enhance employment in the same or another profession. The determination shall be entered into CARES case comments.
- The individual is employed at least five (5) hours per week or 20 hours per month at the time the authorization for school begins and continues to be employed at least five (5) hours per week or at least 20 hours per month throughout the semester. A child care administrative agency may have a policy that exceeds 20 hours per month if the policy is in writing and is applied to all parents and is made available to the parent.
- The employment meets the Wisconsin Shares child care assistance definitions of unsubsidized employment
- Unsubsidized employment that is on an "on-call" basis or registration with a temporary employment agency is not qualified as employment for Basic Education as an approved activity. The individual must actually work the minimum hours on a weekly or monthly basis.
- Wisconsin Shares child care assistance for participating in education under this section is limited to no more than 24 months per lifetime of the parent. The 24 months need not be consecutive.
- The 24 months shall be recorded in the CSAW system by the agency or child care authorizing agency.



- The 24 month rule does not apply to individuals in a W-2 or Tribal TANF employment position in.
- Wisconsin Shares child care assistance is not available for study time.
- Wisconsin Shares child care assistance is not available for online courses that are self-paced and do not require specific log on times for class sessions.

1.5.7 Technical College or Course of Study Producing Employment

Participate in a course of study at a technical college or participate in a course of study that would produce an employment skill as determined by the department if the Wisconsin Works or its subcontracted eligibility determination agency determines that the course or courses would facilitate the individual to maintain employment.

- A school and work schedule is required for all participants.
- The applicant/child care authorizing agency must determine that the education will provide an employment skill that facilitates the employed individual's efforts to maintain their current position or enhance employment in the same or another profession.
- The determination shall be entered by the agency into CARES case comments.
- Apprenticeships are an allowable approved activity for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance. The apprenticeship may be paid or unpaid. Apprenticeships are exempt from the five hour per week work requirement.
- Except for persons in apprenticeships, the individual is employed at least five (5) hours per week or 20 hours per month at the time the authorization for school begins and continues to be employed at least five (5) hours per week or 20 hours per month throughout the semester. A child care administrative agency may have a policy that exceeds 20 hours per month if the policy is in writing is applied to all parents and is and made available to the parent.
- The employment meets the Wisconsin Shares child care assistance definitions of unsubsidized employment, or
- The employment is a work study position, or



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- The employment is directly related to the individual's school and their participation in the employment while in school produces a measurable cash value such as: fellowships, working for room and board as a Resident Assistant in a dormitory or private apartment, teaching assistant positions for tuition credits, or any other education-related employment that has a measurable cash value equivalent to five (5) hours per week at the state minimum wage through out the semester. Student teaching and unpaid internships do not meet the employment criteria of this section.
- Unsubsidized employment that is on an "on-call" basis or registration with a temporary employment agency is not qualified as employment for approval of Technical College or Course of Study Producing Employment as an approved activity. The individual must actually work the minimum hours on a weekly or monthly basis.
- Wisconsin Shares child care assistance for participating in education under this section is limited to no more than 24 months per lifetime of the parent. The 24 months need not be consecutive.
- The 24 months shall be recorded in the CSAW system by the agency or child care authorizing agency.
- The 24 month rule does not apply to individuals in a subsidized employment position in W-2 or in a Tribal TANF employment position.
- Wisconsin Shares child care assistance is not available for study time.
- Wisconsin Shares child care assistance is not available for online courses that are self-paced and do not require specific log on times for class sessions.



1.6.0 Financial Eligibility Requirements

1.6.1 Asset Testing

There is no asset testing for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance eligibility determinations.

1.6.2 Income Limits

The applicant's Assistance Group must meet the program's income guidelines to be financially eligible for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance:

The income limit for new applicants, including cases that have closed for more than thirty days, is 185% federal poverty level (FPL) for the Assistance Group family size (excludes foster parents, kinship care parents who receive kinship care payments and have a court order for the child's care, and subsidized guardians/interim caretakers in Milwaukee County, see below).

1.6.21 Foster Parents, Subsidized Guardians in Milwaukee County Only, Kinship Care Relatives with A Court Order for Placement and Receipt of Kinship Care Benefits

If the applicant is caring for a child (ren) as:

- a foster parent, or
- a kinship care relative who is receiving kinship care assistance or is on a waiting list to receive kinship care assistance and has a court order for the child's placement, or
- as a subsidized guardian or interim caretaker in Milwaukee County, the income limit is based upon the child (ren)'s natural or adoptive family income being no more than 200% FPL at the time of the child's placement.

1.6.3 Maximum Income for On-Going Cases

The maximum income for any family to remain eligible for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance is 200% FPL.

Financial eligibility criteria is no longer met when a family's income exceeds 200% FPL. If the individual reports the increased income within 10 days, eligibility shall continue until family income exceeds 200% for two consecutive months.

1.6.4 Gross Income Test

To determine eligibility for the Wisconsin Shares child care assistance program, count all available earned and unearned income except for those sources indicated under the following Disregard and Limited Disregard sections. However, exclude earned income of minors including earned income of minors in supervised independent living situations.

Include earned and adjusted self-employment income of all assistance group members except for minors and dependent 18 year olds.



Do not count the earned or unearned income of foster parents, subsidized guardians in Milwaukee county, or kinship care relatives for court ordered kinship care cases if they are applying only for child care for their foster or kinship care children.

Do not subtract child support paid out.

1.6.5 Unavailable Income

Only use income that is actually available for use:

- Income is available when the person has a legal interest in it and has the legal ability to make it available for support and maintenance.
- Income is considered unavailable when s/he can reasonably document it cannot be accessed for 31 or more days.
- Unavailability is usually documented by a letter from an agency or the source stating when the person will receive the income.
- Until the amount and the payment date are known, do not count the income.

1.6.6 Prospective Income Calculations (Exclude Some Migrant Families)

Calculate income prospectively by making the best estimate of monthly income based upon the information available. Multiply the hourly rate of payment by the number of hours worked per week.

$$\$7.50 \times 40 = \$300 \text{ per week.}$$

Multiply the amount per week by 4.3 weeks to arrive an average monthly income.

$$\$300 \times 4.3 \text{ weeks} = \$1,290 \text{ per month}$$

Convert income received less than a month to a monthly amount.

$$\$700 \text{ per month tenant payment} = \$700/\text{month}$$

1.6.7 Fluctuating Income

If the amount of regularly received income varies, use an average.

Example:

Harold is a salesman and receives a commission check every quarter. His last commission payment was \$150. Divide \$150 by three (3) months and it averages \$50 per month income.



Income that is normally obtained but received on an irregular basis is to be averaged over the period between payments.

Example:

Harold is a salesman who doesn't always receive a commission check every quarter. He did not receive a commission last quarter. His last check was \$200 and was received six (6) months ago. Divide the \$200 by six (6) months and count \$33.33 per month as his income until he reports receiving another commission check.

If neither the amount nor the frequency is consistent or predictable, count it only for the month in which it is received.

Example:

Harold is a salesman and he receives a sales commission check whenever his company determines that their profits will allow them to pay out commissions. Harold has not received a commission check for 9 months although before that he was getting them on a quarterly basis. Harold reports that he received a \$175 check this month, but doesn't know when he will receive on again. Count \$175 for this month's income.

1.6.8 Non-Recurring Income

Income that is received on a one-time basis is to be budgeted in the month that it is received.

Examples:

Lottery
Employee Bonus
Lump Sum Payments

1.6.9 Contractual Income

Contractual income that is annual income (intended to provide support for the entire year), and is not paid on an hourly or piece work basis, should be prorated over 12 months. Contractual income that is not annual income (intended to provide support for the HH for only a portion of the year), and is not paid on an hourly or piece work basis, shall be prorated over the period the income is intended to cover.



Example 1: Joe works for public school as a teacher's aid. Joe has worked there for the last 3 years and receives a 9 1/2 month contract every August. He earns \$13,480.50 annually. He lives off of his salary as a teacher's aid for the full year and does not supplement his income during the summer. Average his income over 12 months=\$1,123.40.

Example 2: Nancy works for the public school as a nurse part-time. She receives a contract for 9 1/2 months every August. In the summer she supplements her income with a job at a Girl Scout campground in the first aid tent. Average Nancy's income over 9 1/2 months because her contract is not her annual income.

Income from piecework or hourly work is not contractual income. Do not treat it as such.

1.6.10 Income Sources

Money, wages or salary, income from self-employment, social security, dividends, interest on savings or bond, income from estates or trusts, net rental income or royalties, public assistance, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), pensions and annuities, unemployment insurance, worker's compensation, alimony and other maintenance payments, and veteran pensions, but excluding any of the income sources listed in the following Disregard section.

1.6.11 Income Disregards

Disregard repayments that are withheld from Social Security, Unemployment Compensation or other programs that do not base eligibility on income and assets.

Do not count the following income toward the child care gross income test:

Child Support Payments

Effective March 1, 2000, **do not** count child support or family support payments received by any individual in the child care assistance group. This income is also not included for the determination of the family co-pay.



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Earned Income of Minor Dependents

Effective March 1, 2000, **do not** count earned income of minor **dependents** in a child care assistant group. This income is also not included for the determination of the family co-pay.

Earned Income Credit (EIC)

Do not count income received under the federal/state EIC, nor payments made by an employer under the federal advanced EIC.

- State and federal tax refunds and Homestead Credit Payments do not count as income.
- Student financial aid received under a state or federal program do not count as income.
- Scholarships used for tuition or books do not count as income.
- Private grants do not count as income unless made available to the student as cash.

Foster Care Payment, Kinship Care Payment, Subsidized Guardianship, and Adoption Assistance

Do not count income received for Foster Care, Kinship Care, subsidized guardianships, or adoption assistance. This income is also not included for the gross income test or for the determination of the family copayment responsibility.

Loans

Loans are exempt as income, unless available for current living expenses. If available for current living expenses, count the loan as an asset, even if there is a repayment schedule.

Reverse Mortgage Loan Proceeds (1993 Wisconsin Act 88)

Treat payments made to a borrower as proceeds from a loan and not as income. Treat non-disbursed funds as equity in a borrower's residence and not as proceeds from a loan.

W-2 Employment Positions and Job Access Loans

Do not count payments or earnings from any W-2 Employment Position: Trial Jobs, W-2 Transitions, Community Service Jobs, or Job Access Loans.

In-Kind Income

Disregard any gain or benefit that is not in the form of money paid directly to the household; such as meals, clothing, housing, and garden produce.



Benefits for Student-Aged 18 Years Old

Disregard any income received under this program.

Reimbursements

Disregard money paid to the client to reimburse actual expenses incurred or paid or both. Examples of disregarded reimbursements are:

1. Reimbursements or flat allowance or per diem for job or training related expenses. These may be for travel, uniforms and transportation to and from the job or training site, including travel expenses of migrant workers.
2. Reimbursements for a volunteer's out of pocket expenses incurred in the course of his/her work.
3. Medical reimbursements.

Gifts

Disregard cash gifts, such as for birthdays, graduation and Christmas.

Windfalls

Disregard any dollar amount earmarked and used for the purpose it was paid, like back medical bills from an accident or injury, funeral and cemetery costs and replacement or repairs. For medical services which can be provided only at a future date, disregard any amount earmarked for those services provided a signed agreement specifying:

1. Source and amount of the settlement.
2. Purpose for which it is earmarked.
3. It is held in its own account.
4. It is agreed to and understood that if all or part of the settlement is used for a purpose other than for what it is earmarked, that amount used will be considered available income and counted when determining eligibility and co-payments.

Education Programs:

- Higher Education Act of 1965 (PL 89-329).
Employment Skills Advancement Program.



- All student loans and grants, unless the award letter specifically states the loan/grant is for child care purposes.
- Work Study Income. Do not count work study income received in calculating gross income or in determining the family copayment responsibility.

1.6.12 Federally-Funded Benefits

Any income from sources required to be disregarded by federal or state law must not be counted. Sources to have this requirement are:

1. Nutrition Program benefits from:

- National School Lunch Act (PL 79-396).
- Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 88-525).
- Child Nutrition Act of 1996 (PL 89-642). (This includes WIC)

2. Indian Tribal Federal Settlements.

1.6.13 Other Federal Benefits:

- Housing Act of 1949 (PL 81-171).
- Older Americans Act (PL 89-73).
- Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (PL 91-646).
- Robert T. Stanford Disaster Relief and Emergency Act (PL 93-288).
- Housing and Community Development Amendments of 1978 (PL 95-557), however, wages from the act may be counted as income.
- Low Income Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (PL 97-35).
- Old Age Assistance Claims Settlement Act (PL 98-500).
- Workforce Investment Act: WIA for Adults, Rapid Response, and Dislocated Workers, National Emergency Grants, Trade Adjustment Act, unless specifically earmarked for child care expenses.



- Refugee Resettlement Reception and Placement income for Iraqi and Afghan immigrants who have been granted Special Immigration Visa's (SIV's) under Section 1059 of the NDAA; PL 109-163.

1.6.14 Limited Disregards

Some income may be counted under limited circumstances, examples are listed below:

- Americorps*VISTA (PL 93-113). Disregard, unless the VISTA agency director determines volunteers are receiving the equivalent of minimum wage. Treat Americorps income the same as VISTA income. Disregard it, unless the income is equivalent to minimum wage.
- Indian Tribal Judgment Funds use or Distribution Act (PL 93-134). Count per capita shares in excess of \$2,000 and income above \$2,000 per year.
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (PL 93-112). Disregard wages, allowances or reimbursements for transportation or personal assistance services costs paid to reasonably accommodate an employee, such as a vehicle modification made to accommodate a disability or a payment by DVR to support a rehabilitation plan.
- AFDC Exclusion from Income (PL 97-248). Payments excluded, if made without Federal Financial Participation (FFP) and under a state program continuously in effect since before January 10, 1979.

1.6.15 Self-Employment Income

When the prior year's self employment income tax information is available, and the past circumstances represent present circumstances, (this would include normal business fluctuations based on the type of business) use the prior year's tax form to calculate a monthly income amount (See example 1).

When the prior year's self-employment income tax information is not available or the past circumstances do not represent present circumstances and at least 6 months (or more) of actual self-employment income information is available, use all the month's income to establish a monthly income amount.

Example 1:

John has been a self-employed construction worker for several years. He generally works many hours during the summer months, and very little during the winter. He applies for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance in November and provides an IRS tax form for the previous year to verify his yearly income and expenses. His total yearly self-employment income minus his total yearly allowable expenses is divided by 12 to



determine a monthly income average. Based upon his monthly income he may meet financial eligibility criteria.

John reports on January 7th that he has not worked since December 30th. This is a normal fluctuation in his business so there would be no change in the income budgeted, however, John's eligibility for child care ends due to his non-participation in approved activity.

When the prior year's self-employment income tax information is not available or the past circumstances do not represent present circumstances, the applicant or recipient must complete a SEIRF for the months the business has been in operation or for the months of operation since a change in circumstances.

The applicant or recipient may complete a SEIRF for each month separately or combine the information on one SEIRF.

When new self-employment business is reported or when a change in circumstances occurs and the past circumstances no longer represent the present, recalculate self-employment income as follows:

- When two or more full months of actual self-employment income information is available, use all of the actual income available to establish a monthly net income amount. See example 2.
- When at least one full month but less than two full months of actual self-employment income information is available, calculate a monthly average net income amount using the actual net income received in any partial month of operation, the one full month of operations and an estimate of net income for the next month. See example 3.
- When there is less than one full month of actual income information available, calculate a monthly average self-employment income using the actual self-employment income received in the partial months (since the change in circumstance occurred) and estimated gross receipts and "allowable" expenses for the next two months. See example 4.

Use the average until the person's next review or if a significant change in circumstances is reported between reviews.

**Example 2:**

Bonnie applies for child care on April 5, 2007. She reports that she started self-employment in January 2007. The agency uses a SEIRF for January, February, and March to determine the prospective self-employment income estimate for Bonnie's six-month eligibility period.

On Bonnie's September SMRF, no change in self-employment income is reported and the worker continues to use the average determined at the time of application.

Example 3:

Ricardo is applying for child care on February 5, 2007. He started self-employment on December 15th. To calculate his prospective self-employment income, he completes a SEIRF for December, January, and February including his actual income and expenses for three months. The worker divides this total by three to determine an anticipated monthly average income amount. This amount is used until a change in self-employment is reported, or until Ricardo completes a new application or review.

Example 4:

Jenny receives child care assistance and has been self-employed as a hair dresser since 2002. Jenny's eligibility period is from May 2006 to November 2007. The worker used Jenny's 2005 IRS tax return to establish a monthly income amount.

In March 2007 Jenny reports that she has been unable to work since breaking her arm on February 17. She is not sure when she will be able to return to work, but it will not be until at least May. The worker has Jenny complete a SEIRF for February 17-28 (actual income since the change in circumstance occurred) and for March and April using the best estimate of income to establish her prospective self-employment income. The worker will use these three months to determine a prospect self-employment income estimate for the remainder of the eligibility period. Jenny does not need to submit any additional SEIRFs. Authorizations for child care would not be written for Jenny during the time that she is off of work.

1.6.16 Self-Employment Income Sources:

Business

Income from operating a business.

Capital Gains

Income from selling securities and other property.



Rental

Rental income is rent received from properties owned or controlled. Rental income is either earned or unearned. It is earned only if the owner actively manages the property an average of 20 or more hours per week. It is unearned when the owner reports it to the IRS as other than self-employment income.

Use “net” rental income in the eligibility determination. “Net” rental income is the gross rental receipts minus business expenses.

When the owner is not an occupant, “net” rental income is the rent payment received minus the interest portion of the mortgage payment and other verified operational costs.

When a life estate holder moves off the property and the property is rented, “net” rental income is the rent payment received minus taxes, insurance and operational costs. The operational costs are the same as the costs the holder was liable for when living on the property.

When the owner lives in one of the units of a multiple unit dwelling, compute “net” rental income as follows:

1. Add the interest portion of the mortgage payment and other operational costs common to the entire operation.
2. Multiply the number of rental units by the total in Step 1.
3. Divide the result in Step 2 by the total number of units to get the proportionate share.
4. Add the proportionate share to any operational costs paid that are unique to any rental unit. This equals total expenses.
5. Subtract total expenses from the total rent payments to get “net” rent.

Royalties

Royalty income is income received for granting the use of property owned or controlled, usually a patent or copyrighted material or a natural resource. The right to income is often expressed as a percentage of receipts from using the property or as an amount per unit produced. Royalty income is always unearned income.

1.6.17 Anticipated Earnings

The Self-Employment Income Report Form, (SEIRF) DES-2131, simplifies reporting income and expenses when earnings must be anticipated. It is modeled after IRS Form 1040, Schedule C and can be used to report income for any type of business with any form of organization. However; some, especially farm operators, may find it easier to complete the IRS tax form when income and expense items are more complex.



To compute anticipated earnings, the person must complete a SEIRF for those months of operation since the change in circumstances occurred (the beginning of a business is considered a change of circumstances). S/he may complete the SEIRF for each month separately or aggregate the months on one SEIRF.

1. For six or more months of operation since the change, calculate monthly average income and use it for the rest of the year.
2. For changes in months one through five, calculate monthly average over six months of operation.
3. For less than one month of operation since the change, the person must estimate income and expenses for the next two months on a SEIRF. Divide the estimate by two to get monthly income for the first two months. Next, calculate the cumulative monthly average over six months of operation.

Whenever self-employment income is anticipated, agencies must inform the families that if their anticipated self-employment income changes, they must inform the agency so a new estimate can be computed. Agencies may want to give a copy of the calculation of the estimated income based on SEIRF(s) to the family so they are aware of what was used to determine anticipated self-employment income.

Agencies will determine adjusted self-employment income by entering gross receipts and subtract allowable expenses. **Depreciation is not an allowable expense.** If the expenses exceed the gross receipts, the self-employment income will be zero. Those additional expenses, which exceed the gross receipts, will not be subtracted from other earned income in the household.

1.6.18 SEIRF or Tax Form Requirement

All self-employment cases must have either a corresponding SEIRF (DWSP-1231) (R.01/2008) or tax form scanned into the Electronic Case File (ECF), plus supporting documentation if the self-employment is questionable. Additionally, a copy of the taxes must be included if the reason for a SEIRF is a change in circumstances and on-going businesses should have taxes scanned in ECF for the prior year.

1.7.0 Verification Requirements

1.7.1 Authority to Request Information

The Wisconsin Works or County/Tribal Human Service agency may request any information that is necessary and appropriate in order to make a correct eligibility decision. However, do not verify an item that is not required, or is not questionable.



1.7.2 Required Verification Information

The Wisconsin Works or County/Tribal Human Service agency must verify the level of income and approved activity participation for all parents in the Assistance Group (adult and teen parents). At a minimum, the following information must be verified:

- Identity and age;
- Residence;
- Marital status;
- Citizenship status or alien status of the children;
- Social security number or SSN application of the children;
- Income sources and amounts;
- Household composition (including temporary absence of children);
- Approved activity participation (See Approved Activities Section); and
- The Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) of employers for participants in unsubsidized employment as an approved activity.

1.7.3 Responsibility for Providing Verification

The Wisconsin Shares child care assistance applicant has the primary responsibility for providing verification and resolving questionable information.

1.7.4 Informing Applicant of Items Needed

The applicant must be informed in writing of the verification items that are needed along with a due date.

1.7.5 Applicant Time Limits

The applicant has seven (7) business days from the date the verification request is made to submit the needed verification to the Wisconsin Works or County/Tribal Human services agency.

If extenuating circumstances exist that make the verification requirements unduly burdensome, the Wisconsin Works or County/Tribal agencies may extend the verification due date to thirty (30) calendar days from the applicant filing date.

1.7.6 Applicant Unable to Produce Verification

If the applicant is unable to produce the requested verification items, or requires assistance to do so, the applicant agency must assist the applicant in obtaining the verification. To do this, the agency may need the applicant's signature on a written *Release of Information* form to obtain the information from a third party.

If the applicant has made a reasonable effort and cannot obtain the information, the application must not be denied based upon the information that could not be obtained. Instead, the agency must use the available information to process the case and then reassess the case when the requested information is received.



1.7.7 Applicant Refusal to Produce Verification

If the applicant is able to produce the information, but refuses or fails to do so, no eligibility shall exist.

If the applicant fails or refuses to provide verification, the Wisconsin Shares child care assistance application may be denied or the case may be closed. No eligibility shall exist when an individual has the power to produce required verification, but refuses or fails to do so.

1.7.8 Contradictory Information

When an agency receives contradictory information regarding any of the eligibility criteria, the agency should request documentation to substantiate the applicant's claim and allow the applicant seven (7) days to obtain such documentation.

Questionable verification or reporting supplied at application must be referred for fraud prevention.

1.7.9 Social Security Numbers

Providing or applying for a social security number (SSN) is a condition of eligibility under current law, specifically Wisconsin Statute 49.145(2)(k); which states that any person who requests public assistance but does not provide a SSN or apply for one will not be eligible for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance.

SSNs and personally identifiable information will be used only for the direct administration of the program.

Effective 2000, only the child(ren) for whom the Wisconsin Shares subsidy is for is required to be a US citizen or have legal alien status. Therefore, their parents do not have to provide a SSN for themselves for assistance, only for their child(ren) and the provisions outlined in this section pertain only to the child(ren).

If children for whom the Wisconsin Shares subsidy is for do not have SSN's, their parents must apply for them.

Under regulations set forth by the Privacy Act, each time the SSN is requested the individual must be informed that the disclosure is mandatory for eligibility determination, how the number will be used and under what statutory or other authority the number is being requested. A sample statement follows:

"Provision of your SSN or cooperating in applying for a SSN is required to determine eligibility for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance. The number you provide to the agency will be verified through a computer matching program to monitor compliance



with program regulations and for program management. Wisconsin Statutes 49.145 (2)(k)."

A Privacy Act statement is included on all department forms that request disclosure of the SSN for Wisconsin Shares child care eligibility determination.

1.7.10 Validating Verification Items

Validation may be done by:

- Taking a photocopy of the original document and then scanning it into the Electronic Case File (ECF).
- An Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) match report;
- A query response from Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlement (SAVE);
- Client Assistance for Re-employment and Economic Support (CARES) birth query results.

1.7.11 Documentation

Each item used in the Wisconsin Shares child care eligibility determination process must be documented. Photocopies of verification items should be marked with the date the document was obtained along with the initials of the staff person who obtained the documents.

If the document that was used to validate eligibility is scanned into ECF, or if the validations occurred through a CARES data exchange, case comments to document how the eligibility criteria were verified is not necessary. However when there is no original or copy of the document such as when there is a collateral contact, worker observation, a home visit, or a verbal statement, a CARES case comment should contain enough information to describe the nature and source of the information should any follow up be required.

1.7.12 Marking Vital Records "Administrative Only"

Vital records are maintained by the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services and are official records of births, deaths, marriages and divorce. These documents are referred to as Birth Certificates, Death Certificates, Marriage Certificates, and Divorce Certificates. Every time an official vital record is used in the eligibility process it must be marked "Administrative Use Only" per Wisconsin Statute 69.30 (2).

Prior to scanning these documents the worker must photocopy the original document, stamp it with "Administrative Use Only" and then scan the document into ECF. Originals must not be scanned into ECF but must be returned to the applicant.



Certificates of Naturalization and Certificates of Citizenship are not considered vital records, but must also be treated as vital records because they are also official documents.

1.7.13 Verify Only Once

There are a number of items that must be verified only once, such as:

- Identity,
- Social Security Number,
- Birth Date, and
- Citizenship.

In this instance, Verify Only Once means once per lifetime. To assure that these items are only verified once, the applicant agency must scan copies of documents used to verify these items in the ECF in the appropriate folder based upon the document type. When an applicant approaches an agency for services and if these items are known to CARES, the worker will need only to view these documents in ECF and enter case comments documenting that these items were viewed in the ECF and previously known to CARES.

Other eligibility criteria should be reviewed at every eligibility review and when new information is reported or received through a data exchange.

1.7.15 Verifying Employment that Ended Prior to Application Date

If an applicant's employment or income ended prior to the application date, it is necessary to determine whether to collect verification of information related to that employment or income or if collecting the information is not required.

If employment or income ended in a month prior to the month for which eligibility is requested, do not require verification that the employment or income ended unless there is a documented reason why the information is questionable (i.e. the agency believes the applicant is currently employed). An exception to this policy is when a farmworker who has been determined by UMOS to meet the migrant definition is applying only for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance and their income is not prospectively budgeted (See Migrant Section).

Example:

An application for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance is submitted in February 2008. The applicant states that they changed jobs in December from Shopko and started working at Target in January. She is requesting child care assistance starting in February. The applicant received their last check from Shopko in January. Verification is not necessary that employment ended at Shopko because the income was received



in the month prior to the eligibility period. Verification of her employment at Target is required.

Employment and income ending must be verified if it ended recently and it is reasonable to believe income will be received in a month for which eligibility is being determined.

Example:

An application for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance is submitted on February 13, 2008. The applicant states her employment ended January 30th and her last paycheck will be received February 15, 2008. The applicant started a new job on February 1st, 2008. Because the income from the ended employment is needed to determine eligibility for month 1 of the application period, verification is required that the employment ended as well as from the new employment.

1.7.16 Acceptable forms of employment verification:

- Paycheck Stubs
- A letter from an employer with the number of hours of employment per week and the company name, FEIN, and employer signature.
- Self-employment business tax records.
- Self-Employment Income Report Form (SEIRF)
- CARES data exchange/UI query
- Employer Verification of Earnings (EVFE-10146 (07/08) with the number of hours of employment per week and the company name, FEIN, and employer signature.

1.7.17 Sources of Verification for Each Eligibility Item

Eligibility Criteria	Suggested Sources of Verification
Identity (verify identity only once)	Driver's License State issued ID Card Employee ID Card Student ID Card US Government ID Card Military ID Card Native American ID Card issued by a Federally recognized tribe Any photo ID issued by USCIS US Passport CARES birth query (Wisconsin births only) Paycheck displaying the applicant's name



	Any unexpired immigration document Any other reliable document that verifies identity
Age	Certified copy of Birth Certificate (must be marked "For Administrative Use") Hospital Birth record Driver's License US Passport State Issued ID Card Certificate of Naturalization (should be marked "For Administrative Use") Certificate of Citizenship (should be marked "For Administrative Use") Native American ID Card or other tribal membership documentation issued by a Federally recognized tribe CARES birth query (Wisconsin births only) Any unexpired immigration document Any other reliable document that verifies birth date
Wisconsin Residency (verify residency each time a change is made) (do not require residence verification for homeless or migrant assistance group newly arrived in the areas)	Lease agreement Utility bill for water, gas, electricity, or telephone that includes name and address Mortgage receipt Subsidized house program approval Weatherization program approval Pay check stub including name, address, employer's name, address and phone number Wisconsin Driver's License Wisconsin ID Card Signed statement from a shelter or individual providing temporary residence Wisconsin Motor Vehicle registration Any other reliable document that verifies Wisconsin residency.
US Citizenship of Child(ren): Verify Only Once	Certified copy of Birth Certificate (must be marked "For Administrative Use") Baptismal Certificate if place of birth is shown Hospital Birth record CARES birth query (Wisconsin births only) Native American ID Card or other tribal membership documentation issued by a Federally



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	recognized tribe
	Certificate of Naturalization (should be marked "For Administrative Use")
	Certificate of Citizenship (should be marked "For Administrative Use")
	What about a US passport?
Alien Status of Children: (except Afghan or Iraqis with Special Immigrant Visas under Section 1059 of the NDAA 2008: PL 109-163/See next section)	Please see W-2 Manual Chapter 2.2.1.1 and Chapter 20
Marital Status	Self Declaration/signature on the CAF is acceptable if no other source is available
	Certified copy of a Marriage Certificate (must be marked "For Administrative Use")
	Judgment of Divorce
Placement of Children	Self-declaration/signature on CAF is acceptable unless contradicted by another source of verification
	KIDS child support disbursement query
Court Ordered Kinship Care	A copy of the court order or a letter from or a collateral contact with a child welfare agency specifying the dates of the effective dates of the court order. Collateral contacts must be documented in CARES case comments.
Social Security Number of Child(ren) for Wisconsin Shares Child Care Assistance	Social Security Card
	Form SS-5, Application for Social Security
	Verbal statement of the SSN
	IEVS Match
	Other reliable documents displaying both the name and SSN.
Earned Income	Paycheck Stubs
	Letter or EVFE form from employer stating earnings and number hours of work per week, company name, FEIN# and employer signature unless the employer is a child care provider or the employment is questionable and the required verifications of Section 1.5.3 Qualified Employer applies (see Qualified Employers and Appendix).
	Self-employment business tax records



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	Self-employment Income Report (DWSP-2131)
	CARES data exchange/UI query
	Employer Verification of Earnings (EVF-E)
Unearned Income	Social Security Award Letter
	Unemployment Compensation Award Letter
	Divorce paperwork identifying a financial settlement
	Documentation of court awarded compensation
	Compensation award letter
	Veteran's Administration Award Letter
	CARES data exchange
	Any other document that verifies unearned income
Temporary Absence (for both eligibility determination and authorizations)	Letter from military, doctor, etc., contingent upon the cause of the absence and verification of being in an approved activity or being unable to be in an approved activity due to being out of the home due to illness.
	Any other document that verifies temporary absence from the AG.
Child Support Cooperation	The determination of Child Support cooperation rests with the Child Support Agency (CSA). The CSA notifies the W-2 or county agency of non-cooperation through a CARES and KIDS interface that issues an alert to the worker to re-run eligibility when a change in cooperation status has occurred.
Approved Activity (for both eligibility determination and for authorizations)	Employment: Paycheck stubs if employer FEIN is in the case record, or letter or EVF form from employer stating earnings and number hours of work per week, company name, FEIN# and employer signature unless the employer is a child care provider. If the employment is questionable and the required verifications of Section 1.5.3 Qualified Employer applies (see Qualified Employers and Appendix).
	Apprenticeships: A copy of the signed contract between the applicant, employer, and the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development.
	Training or Education: letter from employer for employer sponsored training; letter from school for education activity and a copy of the school schedule.



	HSED, GED, High School for parents under age 20: enrollment letter from school.
Excused from Approved Activities in Two - Parent and 3-Generation Households (for both eligibility determination and authorizations)	Letter from a doctor, psychiatrist, or psychologist stating that there is a disability or health condition that prohibits the individual from being able to take care of their children and participating in approved activities so that the other parent can participate in approved activities.

1.7.18 Afghan and Iraqis Refugees Granted Special Immigrant Visas (SIV's)

All financial and nonfinancial policies apply except Refugee Resettlement Reception and Placement income is disregarded. The following documents are allowable for verification. (See Ops Memo 08-23 for additional information for Wisconsin Works program requirements).

Afghan and Iraqis Children with SIV's under Section 1059 of the NDAA 2008; PL 109-163 may present:

Applicant	Documentation
Unmarried Children of Iraqi or Afghan Special Immigrant	Iraqi or Afghan passport with an immigrant visa stamp noting that the individual has been admitted under IV Category S13 and DHS stamp or notations on passport or I-94 showing date of entry.
Unmarried Children of Iraqi or Afghan Special Immigrant in P6 category	SHA Form 1-551 ("green card") showing Iraqi or Afghan nationality (or Iraqi or Afghan passport), with an IV code of S19.

Iraqis with SIV's under Section 1244 of PL 110-181 may present:

Unmarried Children of Iraqi Special Iraqi passport with an immigrant visa



Immigrant	stamp noting that the individual has been admitted under IV) Immigrant Visa) Category SQ2 and DHS stamp or notation on passport of I-94 showing date of entry.
Unmarried Children of Iraqi Special Immigrant	DHS Form I-551 ("green card") showing Iraqi nationality (or Iraqi passport), with an IV (immigrant visa) code of SQ9.

1.8.0 Temporary Absence

The temporary absence policy for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance applies only to two-parents families and children who live in single or two-parent families. All of the following conditions must be met to qualify as being a temporarily absent individual:

- The individual must intend to return to the AG within six (6) months unless there is verification that demonstrates that the individual intends to return to the household after an absence longer than six (6) months.
- Written plans must be submitted to the applicant agency and are subject to agency approval for absences longer than six (6) months.
- Temporarily absent parents must continue to exercise care and control over their children.
- Temporarily absent parents must continue to be in a qualifying activity while they are absent.
- Cases with temporarily absent children may remain open during their absence, but all authorizations for child care should be closed until the child returns to the home if care is still needed.

Parent Short-Term Temporarily Absent Example:

Margie and her spouse David are both employed and have three children that are receiving Wisconsin Shares child care assistance. On October 24 David is admitted to the hospital. It is anticipated that he will be there for two (2) consecutive months and will return home after that. He is on paid sick leave. Margie will continue to work while David is gone. There are no other financial or nonfinancial changes in the household (no income changes to report because he is on paid sick leave, so the co-payment for



child care will remain the same). David still exercises “care and control” over his children.

David is considered temporarily absent. The AG is still five (5) and the family is still eligible because there are no financial or nonfinancial changes contingent upon Margie’s employment and David’s hospitalization. Once David returns home he will no longer be considered temporarily absent and he will need a doctor’s excuse that he cannot take care of the children and he cannot work if the family is to continue to receive child care assistance.

Parent Long-Term Temporarily Absent Example:

Jane and her spouse Mark have three children and are receiving Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy. Mark is in the Army Reserves and is deployed for six (6) months in Iraq. Mark is temporarily out of the house. The AG stays at five (5); his earned income needs to be reported. Jane finds out later that Mark’s term in Iraq will be extended another six (6) months. She notifies the application agency and provides a copy of the Army letter as verification of an extended temporary absence as part of her SMRF documents for her review. The worker enters the information into CARES comments and eligibility is extended another six months as long as no other changes are reported that impact eligibility.

Parent Out of the Home/Not Temporarily Absent Example:

Julie and her spouse Larry have 2 children, are employed, and are receiving Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy. Larry gets convicted of operating a vehicle while intoxicated and is sentenced to jail for 3 months. Although he intends to return to the home when released from jail, he is not considered temporarily absent because he does not continue to exercise care and control over his children. Julie is required to report the change in household size within 10 days; the AG size should be reduced to four (3). Eligibility continues if Julie has met the reporting requirements and continues to be employed.

Child Temporary Absent Example:

Kelly is employed, has two daughters, Jennifer and Cassie, and receives Wisconsin Shares child care assistance. Cassie is to spend two months with her grandmother over the summer, but will return home after the vacation. There are no other financial or nonfinancial changes in the family.

Since Cassie will be returning home is less than six months, she should remain in the AG. However, she should not be authorized for child care while she is out of the house.



1.9.0 Shared Placement Cases

Each parent in a shared placement case may apply for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance for the time that the child in common is residing with him or her while they are participating in an approved activity. Each parent will have their own case number but the child will be assigned a unique PIN number that will be used in both cases. The child Care Payment system is designed to allow a child to be included in two separate Assistance Groups for this situation (See the Authorization Section for Shared Placement Authorizations).

1.10.0 Migrant Farmworkers

1.10.1 Migrant Farmworker Applications

Migrant farmworkers may apply for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance at United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS), or at the local Wisconsin Works, or at County Human Services agency if the county is not a Wisconsin Works agency and has received a subcontract for eligibility determination, or at their Tribal agency if contracted with the department.

1.10.2 Twelve-Month Income Averaging Method

The State of Wisconsin changed the budgeting procedures in 2007 from prospective budgeting to income averaging of the twelve months prior to application for migrant families for whom UMOS has determined meet their migrant farmworker definition if the applicant is **only** applying for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance.

One or more migrant farmworker parents, who are **only** applying for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance, who have minimal or \$0 income last year, and who are contracted to work part-time or full-time should have their past 12 months of income averaged to determine current eligibility.

Start with the month before the application filing date and count backwards twelve (12) months to determine which months are included in the income-averaging period.

Note: Migrant farmworker families who are receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security and are applying only for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance must have their applications processed manually by UMOS because SSI and Social Security income are auto-updated in CARES and any averaged amounts will be over-ridden by the system when auto-updates occur.

All other financial and nonfinancial eligibility criteria must be determined in accordance with Wisconsin Shares child care assistance eligibility policies.



1.10.3 Prospective Budgeting: Wisconsin Shares, Foodshare, and/or Medical Assistance Applications

Migrant farmworkers applying for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance **and Foodshare and/or Medical Assistance** will continue to have their applications processed using the prospective budgeting methodology.

1.10.4 Income Exceeding 200% FPL for On-going Case

If at any time a migrant farmworker's family gross income exceeds the eligibility limits for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance during the period for which they have been determined eligible, they must be referred back to UMOS to have their Wisconsin Shares child care eligibility redetermined manually using the 12-month income average method. The families may still retain Foodshare and Medical Assistance eligibility that the local agencies manage.

1.10.5 Migrant Farmworker Definition

UMOS is responsible for determining migrant farmworker status of all Wisconsin Shares child care assistance applicants and for informing the local Wisconsin Shares or County/Tribal Human Services agencies at the time of referral whether or not specific parents meet the migrant farmworker definition.

Migrant farmworker parents who have not been determined by UMOS to meet the migrant worker definition must have their income eligibility determined by using the current method of prospective budgeting.

1.10.6 No SSN or Proof of Citizenship for Parents Effective 2005

Social Security numbers (SSN's) and proof of US citizenship or legal alien status are not required for parents.

SSN's are not required for parents on the Request for Assistance (RFA).

Children who receive Wisconsin Shares child care assistance must be US citizens or legal aliens and must have SSNs or have an SSN applied for on their behalf (see Section 1.7.9).

1.10.7 Local Agency Requirement to Serve Migrants

Local agencies are required to service and make applications for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance accessible for all individuals residing in the county.



1.10.8 Request for Assistance

The date the migrant farmworker signs the Wisconsin Works (W-2) and Related Program Registration (RFA) form (DWSP-14880) establishes the filing date for the applicant.

1.10.9 Migrant Assistance Groups

Local agencies should only determine eligibility for the persons seeking assistance in the Child Care Assistance Group (CCAG).

Migrant families tend to live in homes with their extended families; local agencies should identify only the members in the household that would be part of the CCAG in the application.

1.10.10 Migrant Family Applicant without UMOS RFA

When a migrant farmworker applies at the local Wisconsin Shares or County/Tribal Human Services agency and they have not been referred by UMOS via a paper Request for Assistance (RFA), the local agency must contact UMOS to find out if the family is known to them and meets the migrant farmworker definition.

1.10.11 Five Day Limit

Local agencies have 5 working days from the date of the receipt of a RFA faxed by UMOS to complete the migrant farmworker interview/application for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance.

The 5 day time limit may be extended as long as the local agency is making attempts to contact the family.

All attempts to contact the family must be documented in CARES comments.

The local agency should attempt various means to contact the family for the application including mailing an appointment notice, attempting to contact the family by phone, and contacting UMOS at (920) 232-9611.

1.10.12 United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS) Responsibilities

UMOS will identify families who need child care and who meet the migrant farmworker definition and are not receiving Social Security (SSA) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and refer them to local agencies to determine eligibility.

UMOS will complete or ask migrant families to complete the paper/manual Wisconsin Works and Related Program Registration (RFA) form (DWSP-14880).

UMOS will indicate on the paper RFA if the family is Spanish-speaking only and if they meet the definition of migrant farm worker.



UMOS will FAX to the local agency the RFA.

UMOS will also send a copy of their registration form for the potentially eligible children with the RFA when the parents have signed a release of information.

UMOS is responsible to report the following changes to the Wisconsin Works or County/Tribal Human Services agency when:

- UMOs moves children served from one UMOs Center to another UMOs Center.
- Authorizations should be ended because children are no longer in care.
- UMOs learns that there are changes in the parents' work status.

UMOS will prepare families for their applications for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance by:

- Setting the RFA dates by using the paper RFA.
- Informing parents of the necessary documents needed; the form What to Bring With You (DWSP-2372) is being used.
- Assisting parents in identifying their child care provider and the hours needed for care including transportation time.
- Acting as a liaison between the family and the local agency to communicate changes needed in authorized hours, sending documentation, and setting up appointments.
- Reminding parents to report changes to the local Wisconsin/Works or County/Tribal Human Services agency.

1.10.13 Migrant Farm Worker Families' Reporting Requirements

Migrant families who have not had their income prospectively budgeted are still required to report changes in their income when it increases by more than \$250 or decreases by \$100 per month because these changes will affect parent co-payment levels.

1.10.14 Eligibility Ends

Eligibility ends when a migrant farmworker family is over income for two consecutive months.



When a migrant farmworker family reports receiving overtime, project the overtime for the next month only. Put the fulltime in for month two, since it is unknown if the overtime will last beyond the next month.

1.11.0 Foster Care: Child Care for Children Living in Foster Homes

Child care assistance policies for children in foster care pertain to placements that are the result of a court order or a voluntary placement that has been made through a licensed child welfare, county or state agency.

1.11.1 Application Location

Foster parents apply for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance at the Wisconsin Works or tribal TANF agency where they are residents, regardless of the foster child's county residency.

1.11.1.1 Foster Parent Income Disclosure

Foster parents and subsidized guardians who need child care for their foster care children are not required to provide their own income information if they are only applying for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance.

This policy was initiated in Ops Memo 98-66. The worker should enter "NV" (Not Verified) for the foster parent's family income unless the family is also applying for child care for their own children or if they are applying for other programs of assistance such as BadgerCare Plus or FoodShare or a W-2 Employment position.

1.11.1.2 Exemption from Cooperation with Child Support

Foster parents are exempt from the non-financial requirement to cooperate with child support for their foster children. They are not exempt from this requirement for child care assistance for their own children.

1.11.1.3 Exemption from Providing Verification within Seven (7) Days

Foster parents are exempt from the non-financial requirement to provide verification within seven (7) days of the intake interview. They are not exempt from this requirement for child care assistance for their own children.

1.11.2 Participation in Approved Activities

Foster parents, and all foster children who are also minor parents, must participate in an approved activity to receive Wisconsin Shares child care assistance for their foster child and their foster child's dependent child(ren). (See Approved Activities Section).



1.11.3 Assistance Group

The Assistance Groups (AG) for foster families include the foster child (ren), any dependents of the children child(ren), and all of the household members relevant to the case (see Assistance Group Section).

1.11.4 Foster Child's Family Income

Financial eligibility for child care for foster children living in foster homes is based upon their natural or adoptive parent's income tested at a maximum of 200% federal poverty level at the time of placement in the foster home.

The group size for biological or adoptive family income testing includes the biological or adoptive parents and full or half siblings who were in the household before the child was placed in the foster home. Exclude the child that was removed from the home, they will be counted in the foster parent's Assistance Group in CARE Worker Web (CWW).

Foster children who are also minor parents have financial eligibility for child care assistance for their dependent child calculated based using their natural or adoptive families' income at the time of placement in the foster home.

- Enter the foster child(ren's) natural or adoptive family income and the foster child's unearned income on the Manual Eligibility page.
- Use the Manual Eligibility page in CWW to insure that the income of the foster family is separately from the foster child(ren's) natural or adoptive family income.

1.11.4.1 Verifying Foster Child's Family Income

Although the child's biological or adoptive family income at the time of the child's placement may be difficult to gather, it is required for eligibility determination under current law. Foster children have Title IV-E eligibility determination that is used for their programs. If the biological or adoptive parent income is not known at the time of placement, the eligibility worker should enter zero on the Manual Eligibility page in CARES Worker Web and document in CARES comments that the information was not available from the child welfare or child support agency. If the child support agency is not able to locate the biological or adoptive family income by the child's first six-month review, the eligibility agency may stop seeking the information if they document it in CARES case comments that IV-D child support still could not locate the parent income, and continue to enter zero on the Manual Eligibility page until the child welfare or child support agency or any other source reports otherwise.



1.11.5 Reporting Changes

Foster parents are required to report changes in their Assistance Group that affect eligibility including when foster children change placements in or out of their homes or when there is a change in approved activities.

1.11.6 Six-Month Reporting Forms (SMRF's)

Foster parents are required to meet the six-month review criteria, including submitting completed and signed Six Month Review Forms (SMRFs) along with the required check stubs that are used to verify continued employment.

1.11.7 Foster Parent Potential Costs

Foster parents may incur child costs for their foster children for several reason, including but not limited to if the child care provider requires payment for fees or if the provider's rate exceeds the county maximum rate established by the department for their geographic location or any other costs that the foster parent agreed to under a contractual relationship with the child care provider.

1.12.0 Subsidized Guardians/Interim Caretakers (Milwaukee County Only)

Subsidized guardianship policies mirror the foster care guidelines above; substitute subsidized guardianship for foster parents in CARES Worker Web and use FOS as the co-payment type.

1.13.0 Kinship Care

1.13.1 Kinship Care Relative Definition

Kinship care relatives are individuals who are taking the place of a parent for a child and the relative is related to the child as a stepparent, a brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, first cousin, nephew, niece, aunt, uncle or any grand person of a preceding generation as denoted by the prefix of grand, great, or great-great, whether by having the same ancestor, direct affinity or legal adoption, or the spouse of any person named in this paragraph, even if the marriage is terminated by death or divorce.

1.13.2 Kinship Care Relative Eligibility

Kinship care relative child care eligibility cases are not all processed the same under current law and in the CARES/CWW system. Wisconsin Shares child care assistance categorizes Kinship Care cases as two separate case types:

Court Ordered Kinship Care, *or*
Non-Court Ordered Kinship Care.



1.13.3 Court Ordered Kinship Care Child Care Assistance Cases:

Financial eligibility for kinship care relatives who receive 1) kinship care benefits for the child, or have been placed on a waiting list for kinship care benefits, and 2) have a court order for care of the child are processed as Court Ordered Kinship Care cases in CARES Worker Web, and the income of the child's natural or biological family is used to determine financial eligibility.

The natural or adoptive family gross income can be no more than 200% federal poverty level (FPL) at the time of the child's placement.

All other kinship care relative cases are considered non-court ordered kinship care cases and have their financial eligibility held to a gross income limit of 185% FPL or 200% FPL for no more than two consecutive months for an on-going case. (See Non-court ordered Kinship Care Cases).

1.13.4 Court Order and Kinship Care Benefit

Both conditions must be present to qualify for using the child's natural or adoptive families' income instead of the kinship care relative's income: 1) the kinship care relative must be receiving kinship care benefits for the child (or have applied and have been approved and are on a waiting list for kinship care benefits) and they must have a court order to provide care for the child.

1.13.5 Court Order Types

The court order for care can be Children in Need of Protection and Services (CHIPS), or guardianship order under Wisconsin Statutes Ch 48 or 54 or 880.

1.13.6 Verifying the Child's Biological or Adoptive Family Income

The income level of the kinship care child's biological or adoptive parents may not be available to the applicant kinship care relative, and will need to be requested from the placing child welfare or child support agency.

Although the child's biological or adoptive family income at the time of their placement may be difficult to obtain, it is required for eligibility determination under current law. If the biological or adoptive parent income is not known at the time of placement, the eligibility worker should enter zero on the Manual Eligibility page in CARES Worker Web and document in CARES comments that the information was not available from the child welfare or child support agency. If the child support agency is not able to locate the biological or adoptive family income by the child's first six-month review, the eligibility agency may stop seeking the information if they document it in CARES case comments that IV-D child support still could not locate the parent income, and continue to enter



zero on the Manual Eligibility page until the child welfare or child support agency or any other source reports otherwise.

1.13.7 Co-Payment

The copayment type for court ordered kinship care cases is KIN=zero.

1.13.8 Minor Parents in Kinship Care

Minor parents in court ordered kinship care child care cases have their financial eligibility for child care assistance for their dependents based upon their natural or adoptive family (Assistance Group) at the time of placement in the kinship relative's home.

1.13.9 Kinship Care Relative Parent of Minor Parent

If the kinship care relative is the parent(s) of a minor parent and the kinship care relative receives kinship care benefits for their child's dependent child (their grandchild) and the kinship care relative has a court order for care of their child's dependent child (the grandchild) the financial eligibility is based upon the natural or adoptive family (Assistance Group) of which the grandparents belong. Therefore, grandparent's income must be included in the Assistance Group gross income calculation.

Example: Martha's teenage daughter Tina is seventeen and a parent of an infant named Debbie. Martha has court ordered guardianship of Debbie and receives kinship care payments on her behalf. Tina lives in the home with Martha and Debbie. Tina attends high school and Martha works full-time. Financial eligibility is based upon Debbie's natural or adoptive family being no more than 200% FPL. Debbie's family consists of Tina, and Martha, and herself (Assistance Group size equals three).

1.13.10 Approved Activity Requirement

Kinship care relatives, and all kinship care minors in the home who are also parents, must meet the nonfinancial eligibility requirement of being in an approved activity to



receive Wisconsin Shares child care assistance for their kinship care child and, if applicable, their kinship care child's dependent child(ren). (See Approved Activities Section).

1.13.11 Manual Eligibility Page in CWW

Using the Manual Eligibility page in CWW insures that the income of the kinship care relative family is calculated separately from the kinship care child (ren's) natural or adoptive families' income.

1.13.12 Requirement to Report Changes

Kinship care relatives are required to report changes in their Assistance Group that affect eligibility including when kinship care children change placements in or out of their homes or when there is a change in approved activities.

1.13.13 Six and Twelve Month Reviews

Kinship care relatives are required to meet the six-month review criteria, including submitting completed and signed Six Month Review Forms (SMRFs) along with the required check stubs used to verify continued employment.

Kinship care relatives are required to meet the twelve-month review criteria.



1.14.0 Non-Court Ordered Kinship Care Cases

All kinship care relatives who are caring for a relative child in place of a parent who do not both receive a kinship care benefit for the child and a have court order for the care of the child are considered **non-court ordered for child care assistance in the CARES Worker Web System.**

Examples:

Bob and Jane are raising Jane's sister's child, Nancy. Bob and Jane receive kinship care for Nancy, but they do not have a court order for her care. This is considered a non-court ordered kinship care case. Financial eligibility is based upon Bob and Jane's Assistance Group being no more than 185% FPL at the time of application, or no more than 200% FPL for two consecutive months if their case is already open. The co-payment is coded as NCK= a reduced amount.

Heidi is raising her brother's child, Mark. Heidi does not receive kinship care benefits, but she has court ordered guardianship. Although Heidi has court ordered guardianship, this is not considered a court-ordered kinship care case because she does not receive kinship care for Mark. Financial eligibility is based upon Heidi's Assistance Group being no more than 185% FPL at the time of application, or no more than 200% FPL for two consecutive months if their case is already open. However, her co-payment is coded KIN=zero amount, because she has a court order for care.

1.14.1 Financial Eligibility

Financial eligibility for non-court ordered kinship care relatives is based upon the kinship care relative's gross income being not more than 185% federal poverty level (FPL) at the time of application, and no more than 200% FPL for two consecutive months for on-going cases.

1.14.2 Approved Activity Requirement

Kinship care relatives, and all kinship care minors in the home who are also parents, must meet the nonfinancial eligibility requirement of being in an approved activity to receive Wisconsin Shares child care assistance for their kinship care child and, if applicable, their kinship care child's dependent child(ren). (See Approved Activities Section).



1.14.3 Requirement to Report Changes

Kinship care relatives are required to report changes in their Assistance Group that affect eligibility including when kinship care children change placements in or out of their homes or when there is a change in approved activities or income.

Examples of Non-Court Ordered Kinship Care Case Types:

1. No kinship care payment but there is a court ordered care.

If the kinship care relative does not receive a kinship care payment for the child, but has a court order for care they are still **considered non-court ordered kinship care in CARES Worker Web** because they do not have both a kinship care grant and a court order.

Because they have a court order for care their copayment is KIN=zero.

2. Kinship care payment, but there is no court ordered care.

If the kinship care relative receives a kinship care payment but does not have a court order they are considered a **non-court ordered kinship care case**.

The copayment type for all other court ordered kinship care cases is NCK=minimum.

1.14.4 Six and Twelve Month Reviews

Kinship care relatives are required to meet the six-month review criteria, including submitting completed and signed Six Month Review Forms (SMRFs) along with the required check stubs used to verify continued employment.

Kinship care relatives are required to meet the twelve-month review criteria.



1.15.0 On Going Eligibility

1.15.1 Reporting Requirements

Parents or other persons receiving Wisconsin Shares child care assistance must report any changes in circumstances that may affect his or her eligibility to the child care administrative agency within 10 days after the change.

1.15.2 Examples of Required Information to be Reported

Examples of some of the information that parents are required to report include:

- A change in the scheduled approved activity hours
- A change in monthly income if it increases by at least \$250 or decreases \$100 or more or any increases that raise gross income above 200% of FPL.
- A change in approved activity status (starting or ending an activity)
- A change in their Assistance Group composition

1.15.3 Agency Time Frame for Eligibility Re-determination

Child care administrative agencies shall re-determine parent need for service and eligibility within ten business days following receipt of a parent's report of a change in circumstances that may affect their eligibility, and at least every six months.

1.15.5 Six Month Reviews and Six Month Review Forms (SMRF's)

Foodshare and Child Care share the six month review process and Six Month Review forms (FS/CC SMRF's) except that Wisconsin Shares child care has additional reporting requirements included on a separate form called the Child Care Add On.

One Reminder Notice for the parent's six month eligibility review is sent to the parent the weekend after Adverse Action (AA) in month four of receiving assistance since their last review, and at the beginning of month five for any case that closed during Adverse Action in month four, but reopened in month five.

The FS/CC SMRF and instructions are sent to parents the weekend after Adverse Action (AA) in month five (known as the sent month) for cases that are open for month six, and are sent again in the beginning of month six for cases that were pending closed and then re-opened between AA and the beginning of month six.

Much of the information on the FS/CC SMRF is needed for the child care assistance eligibility review, but not all of the information that is required for the Foodshare program. Information that is not needed for a child care only case is pre-filled in on the forms with "Not Required," and the check boxes blacked out for questions asking for information when the information is not needed for child care.

The Child Care Add On Form is preprinted with the following information:



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- Date the form is due back.
- Date Child Care eligibility will end if forms are not completed and returned timely.
- Each adult in the Assistance Group is pre-printed in Section A.
- Each child with an authorization that spans the SMRF process month is pre-printed in Section B along with the child care provider's name and number of hours authorized.

SMRF's are due back to the agency by the fifth day of month six, known as the process month.

FS/CC SMRF

To be considered complete for Wisconsin Shares child care assistance alone:

- All of the **yes and no questions** for the FS/CC SMRF must be answered except the for those in Section 2 (regarding child support obligations), and
- A responsible participant in the child care Assistance Group must sign the Form.

Child Care Add-On Form

Section A-Approved Activity

- Approved Activity must be completed.
 1. The sections displays the pre-printed names of individuals in the current child care Assistance Group who must be in an approved activity in order for child care eligibility to exist.
 2. **An activity must be identified for each adult and minor teen parent in the Assistance Group.** If other adults or minor teen parents have been reported on the FS/CC SMRF as moving into the household, their activity type must also be identified on the Child Care Add On or on a separate piece of paper.
 3. The daily start and stop times **do not need to be completed** in order for the SMRF to be considered complete for eligibility. This information is used to determine the number of hours needed for child care authorizations and is not used to determine eligibility.

Section B-Child Care Authorization Information (Not Required for "Completeness")

- This section is **not required** in order for the Child Care Add On to be complete or processed. Authorization information is not required to determine eligibility for child care. This section part of the Child Care Add On to facilitate the



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communication of authorization information needed in order to authorize child care for eligible child care Assistance groups. Authorization information provided on the Child Care Add On should be treated as a request for authorization.

Section C- Signature

- A responsible participant in the child care Assistance Group must sign the form.

Wisconsin Works or County/Tribal Human Service agency workers must review the returned SMRFs for completeness within five (5) business days of receipt of the form.

If either the SMRF or Child Care Add On are incomplete, the worker may either:

- Contact the participant to get the information needed to complete the form(s) or
- Hold the form(s) for the participant to come in and sign or
- Mail the incomplete form(s) to the participant with the Incomplete Letter

If the worker is unable to make contact with the participant, the incomplete form(s), along with the Incomplete Letter must be returned to the participant.

- Incomplete Notices are available for print/mail for FS/CC SMRF and the child care add-on form.

Regardless of when the SMRF is coded complete or incomplete, if the SMRF is not processed by Adverse Action in the SMRF due month, CARES will close the case at the end of that month.

If a case closes in month six (6) for no SMRF, the case can re-opened if the SMRF comes in anytime during month 7.

If the case closes in month (6) for no SMRF and no SMRF comes in for the client in month seven (7) the case closes and can only open for child care assistance if there is a new application for child care assistance. The income eligibility test will be 185% FPL.

1.15.16 Twelve Month Reviews

Workers must use the Application/Review page in CWW whenever there is a review. This page replaced the Review Questions Page in CWW in June 2008. The page will be scheduled when the worker selects the "Begin Review" option in the Case Summary Page. See Ops memo 08-31 for instructions. Review codes for Child Care are:

"F-Face to Face"-allows the review to count for child care.

"T-Telephone"-allows the review to count for child care.



“N-No Review”-does not allow the review to count for child care.

If a case closes in month twelve (12) for no review, the client has thirty (30) days from the closing date to request a rescheduled review, and if continued eligibility is the result of the review, the case must reopen back to the closing date.

If the case closes in month twelve (12) for no review and client has not requested a rescheduled review during the month after the review, the case closes and can only open for child care assistance if there is a new application and income will be tested at 185% FPL.

Child care administrative agency staff may conduct reviews with parents either in person or over the telephone.

Notices for reviews are sent to families from workers via CARES either stating that the worker will schedule an appointment, or as a request for families to contact their worker to set up a review appointment. The type of Notice of Review is dependent upon the county or tribal preference and can be viewed in CMCO in the CARES system. Counties or tribes may change their preference by contacting the W-2 Help Desk at either: (608) 261-6317 and selecting the CARES menu option 3 or at W2CARESHD@dwd.state.wi.us.

If the client provides the information needed for an authorization during the review, it should be treated as a request for authorization.